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MARCH — APRIL 1979

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The Australian Film Institute ...developing a film culture in Australia

The Australian Film Institute is a non-profit organisation which has in its programme the financing of film studies in Australia. Supported financially by the Federal and State Governments, the Institute has a nationally based membership which is open to the public and from which its policy-making body, the Board of Directors, is selected.

It is open to promote in all forms and disciplines by providing services of benefit to the public. Its objectives are to: promote and facilitate throughout Australia concerned with the film industry and its scholarship and research and film culture.

Some of its services include:

Publishing

Under the patronage of Sydney University, the Institute has a publishing programme which is concerned primarily with the publication of *AUTUMN* (1970-1975) and *WINTER* (1976-1980). This combined publication of early Australian film is available in bookshops and the Institute for \$7.50 per copy.

Work has commenced on a series of monographs, and a complete film in Australia, *AUTUMN* (1970-1975) and *WINTER* (1976-1980) will be published by the Institute. It is a major work which will contain many articles and is available in bookshops and the Institute for \$7.50 per copy.

Australian Film Awards

The most important award event for Australian film is the presentation of the Awards to International Film Festival, which is held annually in the late summer months of the year in the Sydney City.

Exhibiting

The AFI operates the Longford Cinema in Melbourne, the State Cinema in Sydney and selected cinema in the State Cinema, Sydney Opera House, throughout

the country. The AFI provides to the public Australian and overseas film which is often in scarcity as well as a film which is not available in Australia. The AFI also provides to the public a wide range of film studies and research and a large section of the country. Details of cinema and film studies are available in the AFI papers.

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Through the Longford Cinema, the Institute distributes a wide range of film to individuals, schools, groups, libraries, film clubs and other institutions throughout Australia.

Established in 1970, the Longford Cinema is a film club which provides a wide range of film to individuals, schools, groups, libraries, film clubs and other institutions throughout Australia. The AFI provides to the public a wide range of film studies and research and a large section of the country. Details of cinema and film studies are available in the AFI papers.

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Film-making starts with ideas, and the Creative Development Branch of the Australian Film Commission is there to make sure those ideas come across on film.



A scene from THIRD PERSON PLURAL

It supports and encourages the creative and artistic development of film, television and video production.

The Creative Development Branch is involved in a wide range of activities including: the encouragement, appreciation and study of film, especially narrative, fiction and drama; experimental projects, seminars and workshops to encourage new



A meeting of Associates of the Commission

talent; funding of script writing and production, particularly innovative projects including television pilots, dramas, creative documentaries and children's films.

In 1978 the following productions were made under the Experimental Film and Television Fund: **THIRD PERSON PLURAL** — James Ricketson, **TEMPERAMENT UNSUITED** — Ken Cameron, **BUCKS PARTY** — Steve Jodrell, **MAIDENS** — Jeni Thornley, **WOOLLOO-MOOLLOO** — Pat Fiske/Denise White/Peter Gayley, and **LETTER TO A FRIEND** — Sonia Hoffman.



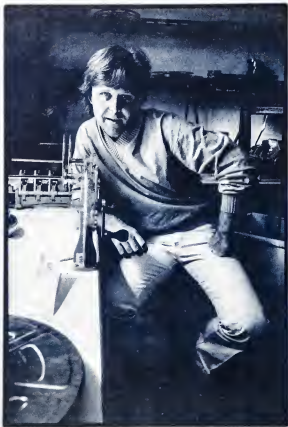
A scene from TEMPERAMENT UNSUITED

For further information on any of the activities of the Creative Development Branch contact:

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Director Creative Development Branch
Australian Film Commission
8 West Street
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4



Roberto Gili

Ken CAMERON

SAILING TO BROOKLYN and TEMPERAMENT UNSUITED

Two of your films, "Sailing to Brooklyn" and "Temperament Unsuitable", are concerned with secondary education and the teacher-student relationship. It seems something of a pre-occupation on your part...

I was a teacher for three years, and film was a way of coming to terms with the problems I had been facing. I never wanted to teach, but I was married, with a baby daughter, and I had no choice. For the first year I was just lost.

Then I became interested in filmmaking. The first films I made were with students in a film teaching situation. I was really using film as a means of getting to know the kids better.

In both films, life in secondary schools is shown as being completely boring — for students and teachers. Is that an extension of your own experience?

Yes, the worst of it. I don't know what the answer is, but I believe schooling is dead.

As a young teacher going into a school situation, no longer believing in the three Rs, I couldn't assume the usual role. But I soon realised that I was inflicting irreparable harm on the kids, often because I was bored. I couldn't see any answer to that within the State school situation, though I know there must be answers.

In "Temperament Unsuitable", Mark (Stephen Sprouss) reacts strongly against the school environment. Yet, apart from creative drama, he has very little idea of alternative teaching...

You must remember he is only a student teacher. If he stayed at the school for any length of time, he would have to develop a more coherent approach.

At the same time, you can't stay in a school without conforming — that is what happened to the Anne (Robyn Nevill) character. She partially shares his view of things, but she knows one can't

Ken Cameron was first inspired to make films when he was a teacher for the New South Wales Education Department. As a writer-director, he made two films about that experience — "Sailing to Brooklyn" (1974) and "Temperament Unsuitable" (1978).

"Temperament Unsuitable" is about a young trainee teacher who finds his radical methods condemned by the teaching establishment. At the end of a trial period, he resorts to deliberate educational anarchy and is dismissed from the profession.

In "Sailing to Brooklyn", a young teacher enters a relationship with a sexually-sophisticated student. As the affair develops, the teacher remains tentative and fearful, being ultimately sustained by the girl's emotional maturity.

In contrast, "Out Of It" (1976) deals with three unemployed, working-class youths who bungle a warehouse job and drive North to escape the police. Their car breaks down and is eventually stolen; they run out of money and enthusiasm; finally, they return to Sydney and their old ways.

In all three films, Cameron pits boredom against repression, and frustration against authority. His characters are trapped and manipulated by institutions and social forces. They are laconic, charming and brash; prone to fits of fatalism, but finding strength in everyday truths: "If you never take a chance, you'll never pull off much of a win."

Cameron has also written screenplays for "Simmonds and Newcombe", the story of Australia's largest manhunt for two of Sydney's notorious escapees; "The Unknown Industrial Prisoner", a project cosponsored by political intervention; and "Monkey Grip", an adaptation of Helen Garner's novel of love, possession, and heroin.

In this interview, conducted by Rod Bishop and Peter Beilby, Ken Cameron talks about his films, his scriptwriting and his new project, "Monkey Grip".



Teachers and student in Ken Cameron's first film, *Sailing to Brooklyn*.

tease that way, you put part of yourself to sleep in order to cope. If you want to stay a teacher, you can't be yourself, you have to learn to relate to people on a safer, approved level. That's what she kept telling him.

Do you regard teaching as a form of theatre?

I think a lot of young teachers feel they are upstaging performers and it is a terrible waste on them. When you look around you realise that all the teachers who have an easy time are performers — like "Seedy" Yates (Ken Goodwin). He is past paternalistic discipline, and just stand-up comedian.

Older teachers are generally authoritarian, but they can often be quite funny and kids tend to understand them — or, at least, know where they stand with them. I feel a lot of affection for those old guys, because they have found a way to cope. That's why I wanted Mark to be obscure. He hasn't learned to cope and feels threatened by the environment.

When Steve Sprouss first came to the school for rehearsal he was shocked to find out how nervous many of the kids were. A lot said they liked teachers who got on with the job and pushed them through the exams. They weren't particularly interested in teachers who were trying to "reach out". Yet a lot of radical teachers go overboard trying to relate to them.

Do you consider Mark's creative drama lessons successful teaching experiments?

No, total failures, though not damaging failures in the first lesson the kids at least have a good time, which is more than they usually get from school.

You are not presenting them as a kind of solution...

No. Did you think the film suggested that?

Well, while they are not successful, they do attempt to grapple with the school environment...

In the sense that they undermine and ridicule it. But they are not meant to be models for alternative teaching, though I

can see the film might suggest that I didn't want to turn Mark into a crusader because each one of the characters — "Seedy" Yates, Anna and Mark — is right in one sense or another. It is the school environment that makes things impossible.

Do you see the school as a model for different kinds of conformity?

It's always meaning people who claim that the message you leave school you forget everything, but unfortunately it's not true. The lessons you learn from school are always with you, and often they are terrible lessons — propensities for the positivity and conformity.

Mark wasn't trying to get the kids to like him as much as to react to him, to invade the kids to react him as a representative of the system. But it's the system that reacts, not the kids. Conformity was.

The aspects of sexuality you deal with in "Sailing to Brooklyn" are much less apparent in "Temperament Unaltered"...

If you read the script of *Temperament Unaltered* you would see it was much more interested in sexuality than the film turned out. It was much more lurid and erotic, but through choices made in the casting scene I was led away from that.

Teaching relationships can be very problematic, but in schools they are suppressed and not allowed to be understood.

I regret that both these films only go part of the way towards an understanding, it is something I have to return to, but not at the moment.

In your films, there is a key moment that hangs off the screen.

In "Sailing to Brooklyn", it is when Steve taps the dealer and the clock falls in the floor in slow motion. In "Out Of It" it is when the boys leave the car and go for a swim. You see their reflection in the door as they walk away, and the camera lifts up as Anna-Maria Wunderschulz's face. It is a poignant moment and you know something is going to happen. In "Temperament Unaltered", it is the scene where the father is taking photos of Deborah Kennedy in the pool. The awkward younger brother drops the Polaroid into the water and it floats about as Deborah swims through the shot, leaving it bouncing on the water. You consider these moments as being particularly significant?

Yes, absolutely. One thing I love about cinema, which I have not given enough time to, is the moment when a mood or action can be crystallized in a single, intense image, one that is often as



The "key" moment from *Out Of It*, where Anna-Maria Wunderschulz watches the boys go swimming.



On the road. From *Temperament Unaltered* from *Out Of It*.

suggestively ambiguous as it is powerful. Filmmakers, like Robert Bresson, make entire films with this intensity of observation. I want to try and develop it.

With the shot of the dealer I was trying to find a physical not shot, summed up the horrible feeling at the end of a lesson. It is an image teachers will understand.

What is the marketing strategy on "Temperament Unaltered"?

The Co-op has done what it can characteristically in Sydney, and released a preview for print sales. Paul Cocher, who is handling the film theatrically in Melbourne, is also pursuing print sales.

I Paul Cocher was, until recently, distribution manager at the Australian Film Institute.

and hoping to organize a television sale.

There is no reason why it can't be sold to television, even though there has been a trend away from out-of-it television drama. Apart from their few series, the ABC is doing little that is unusual or interesting, and the commercial stations certainly won't.

There was a time when a 30 and film, like *Homesdale*, was a big event. Now you make a 30 age film and people say, "So what?"

OUT OF IT

"Out of It" seems an extension of "Temperament Unaltered", in that the kids appear to have come straight from school, and with a legacy of that education....

People always think they are kids, but they are not. They are meant to be what they look like — guys in their early twenties.

The film was based on a bunch of guys who crashed into my wife's car. We developed a strange relationship with them while they were living the car — they had been in a car accident. I was unemployed at the time and I felt very much like them. I was alienated in their philosophical approach to life on the dole, their directionless lifestyle.

Out of it is a film that has been overlooked, probably for understandable reasons. I think people expected it to be an action/sad film. They weren't prepared for a low-key number, without genre tricks.

I was the journey aspect that interested me most. I have always been interested in Australian journeys. Like the early explorers, these guys head off on a trip that just turns off any nothing. By travelling, they discover their lack of real purpose.

"Out Of It" reminds me of Wim Wenders' "Alice in the Cities"...

Yes, I was greatly influenced by that film, the second-hand dreams of going North, of transcending the terror of life — and failing to make the desired connections that one yearns for. But it's not rich material for cinema because it lacks punch and drive, it is probably more literary than cinematic.

When I made *Out Of It* I was still making films for myself. I didn't worry about who was going to see it, or what they might expect. That is a stage I have passed through, and now I am far more conscious of people's expectations.

It was a difficult period, but I think the situation for most filmmakers has changed a lot since then. It has become harder to make a film, and you can't indulge your many interests in the same degree. You can either make a film that's totally bizarre and experimental, or one that mimics a main-feature and shows that you are "serious". I have been guilty of the latter, becoming serious. I have realized there is a lot of price to pay if you make a bizarre or incomprehensible film — it might be your last.

You have made the mini-features. Is it a form you like to work with?

No, I believe there is something very wrong with that concept.

The Creative Development Fund has been quite fantastic in helping filmmakers, and anybody who has been supported by them is very grateful for having been given the chance. But at the same time, the Creative Development

Branch has helped develop a film career that is very hard to duplicate. You are generously given \$35,000 and you shoot the film in two or three weeks. Yet if you had another \$30,000, and could keep going for another couple of weeks, you could have a feature. It is also difficult to write a satisfying 50 may film.

I think it would be much sadder if people were encouraged to make low-budget features instead. I have talked with Phil Noyce and other directors about this, and they tend to agree.

WRITING

I don't regard myself as a writer, but in this country it is easier to get started in films if you can also write them yourself. The Experimental Film Fund, for example, has always been ready to encourage personal statements.

If you want to start fund with a short story and said, "I want to adapt this", it would be much tougher getting money. I suppose I was scared towards making personal films as a result.

You haven't any particular bent towards writing your films...

No. I would love to find a writer to work with because each time I write a screenplay I find it a terrible ordeal. It takes me ages.

Yet your films demonstrate you have writing talent...

It is just a matter of observation, and that is a quality I find in many Australian films and Australian writing in general. I don't regard what I do as any different from what many other people do.

I think there is too much emphasis on scripts in Australia. Sergio Reg, for example, works from a story-board with scenes. He hasn't ever written a script, because he considers it a waste of time. I feel the same, but at the moment it is something we are all forced to do.

The classic example of how script-orientated we have become is Fred Schepisi's script for *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, which is beautiful to read and a very seductive work, but which, as it turned out, didn't solve a lot of the dramatic and structural problems in the story.

There are Australian filmmakers I greatly admire who have had great difficulty getting money from the Creative Development Branch because they are knocked back at the script stage. That is quite unlike the German situation where filmmakers receive money on the strength of work they have done. If someone has shown their

talents in the past, I think they deserve that kind of help.

You are writing a screenplay for Film Australia at present...

Well, I am researching and preparing a short sponsored film on contemporary housing problems I am working with Tom Maynefield, who is best known as a documentary producer. The film will be a cross between *Carly Carré Home* and *Who Killed Jenny Langley?* It is a dramatized film, made in a stylized documentary form, which will use

a range of documentary techniques to tell the story of a couple who are trying to buy a house over a six-year period. It examines their life in a council park what it's like trying to rent a place when you have no dough and just are on the dole.

SIMMONDS AND NEWCOMBE

You have also been working on a script based on the Simmonds



Ken Carlsen directing a scene from *Temperament Unaltered*.

and Newcombe material. How did that project come about?

Phil Noyce had just finished *Backroads* when I approached him with the idea. He was interested in it, and the McIlreavy asked him about making a feature of it. Phil asked me to write the script and I researched it as all the previous work I'd done on the sites. Les Newcombe had made several of the ABC and newspaper films, and so on.

Finally, I sought out Les Newcombe — Simmonds, of course, is dead — and we had a meeting in a hotel out the back of Ashbur. Les had heard about the script and felt very threatened by it, but fortunately he knew what I had done and we decided to work on it together. We developed a few drafts, and then put it up to the Australian Film Commission.

Simmonds was a very charismatic guy — he even looked like Warren Beatty — and there is an obvious connection between Simmonds in Australian folklore and Benjie and Clyde in American Simmonds' favorite film was William Wyler's *The Desperate Hours*, he also liked Humphrey Bogart, guns, country music and big American cars.

Phil and I found it very attractive that the story was set against the transition from the combi 1950s to the beach early '60s, with rock and roll, salesman and all the changes which found



Berben Speers as Mark, the student teacher who confronts the school system in the book that is the basis upon which they will also spend the system. *Temperament Unaltered*.

their way into Newsworld. Perhaps the time to make this film has passed.

At what stage is the project now?

All this was going on while Phil was busy doing *Newsworld*, and unfortunately the script became rarer or less shelved. Jimmie Blacksmith and Mad Dog have now shown that films of this type generally don't succeed at the box-office. Phil has also been worried about the idea of doing another film in basically the same era as *Newsworld*.

There are three drafts and two of them have been up to the Australian Film Commission. One of these was greatly liked and we were given a lot of money to develop it further. However, by the time we put it up again, big budgets were out of fashion and we were encouraged to either rework it as a low-budget, intimate psychological drama, or as a moderately budgeted show to come to television.

The material took place in the year *Newsworld* was made, and we had always been torn between making a film that looked like *Newsworld*, and had the energy of *Pure Silk*, or making a low-budget feature on the Jimmie Blacksmith scale.

It is interesting that you should equate a socialist story from the late '40s and early '50s with "Mad Dog" and "Jimmie Blacksmith"....

Both have cut-de-oue film structures, the end is inauspicious. One draft of our script is like that, though we have another more daring version which floats between the past and the present. The socialist frames the film but you keep drifting back to the past.

Apparently M & L Castlars are to produce the film.

Yes. We worked together with the McFarlane when they became involved with *The East Wren*. An Ken Newsworld had approached M & L to act as his agents, they came to us.

Now that Phil has announced plans to direct *King Hit*, his version of "The longest personal event of the century", I have given thought to directing *Simmonds and Newcombe* myself.

THE UNKNOWN INDUSTRIAL PRISONER

Many people have David Ireland's *The Unknown Industrial Prisoner* on their bookshelf, but very few have read it right through. It is a very original, imaginative and tough novel, but



Mark (Graham Speight) and Angie (Dorcas Wood), the mother who, while estranged from the victim of *Mad Dog*, is disappointed by the school situation. *Industrial Prisoner*

it doesn't immediately suggest a film.

David Barker was the first to have the rights to the book, but he couldn't get it off the ground. He wasn't able to get a script he liked, or find an old railway that would allow him to film on location. Instead he worked for Shell for several years and the book had apparently circulated through the cassette tapes of all the old railways. There was no way they would let someone come in and make a film that was going to drop the bucket on them.

Despite the problems, Dick Mason of Film Australia has long cherished the project. He saw in *The Unknown Industrial Prisoner* the opportunity to make a film that was entertaining as well as having social and political impact.

Dick has lived several winters over the years, but though he always liked it, through it, I don't know all the reasons and I never asked.

Arch Nicholson, who was to direct the film, and Dick read the script on *Simmonds and Newcombe* and they thought the style was something they could use. Dick called me up and asked me to read the book. I was unemployed at the time and, though it was the last thing I wanted to do in that I wasn't sure I could come up with anything, I needed the money. So I did and set to work, consulting regularly with David Ireland.

The novel doesn't have characters in the usual sense — it has types — as I had to create characters. I also had to carve a narrative out of the book.

At first I was reluctant to do that, thinking it would be me to make a film as barren as the novel — I guess I was influenced by films like *Therese*. Dick, however, didn't want it to go that way, he wanted to make a film that could play at *Statehouse* or *Parliament*.

David had written the novel for those people, and was very upset when he found that they had never read it. Academics and intellectuals were almost the only people to read it.

The project was then stalled....

Film Australia is in a terrible position, so that if a project is rejected, it can't do anything with the script. As a result, practically every writer in the country has a script somewhere in the Film Australia vaults.

Dick has been through this enough times and he was determined not to have it happen again. So, instead of putting it straight up to the ABC, he sent it to people like Bruce Beresford and Tony Buckley to get some idea of what we would be in for. Their responses ran the whole gamut.

people like Tony Buckley looked everything it stood for, while others liked it, thinking it had potential. In the end, the assessments cancelled each other out and were useless. We realized then that we were in trouble.

Dick wanted me to come back and work on another draft, but I was exhausted. I had reached the point where I felt I had nothing more to offer. David was busy on another novel, and he didn't want to go back either. Dick then suggested importing Alan Seymour, and that scored a 50/50 move.

Alan came in and I collaborated with him for a while, but I had become caught up with *Temperament*. Unfazed and, as it was my first film in years, I wanted to spend all my time on it. It was a crazy situation with me trying to add my film with David Hugges) over the telephone. Finally I bucked out.

As well as script-editing my draft, Alan reworked the script, bringing a back more in line with the novel. The end result seemed to satisfy Film Australia but not the ABC. The rest of the story you know.

Are there moves to produce the film independently of Film Australia?

Dick left Film Australia with the hope of producing it himself. He spent most of his productive years at Film Australia working towards the possibility of making films like *The Unknown Industrial Prisoner*. When that was knocked back, he saw the end of the development. A number of people have also left since, and Film Australia seems to have become less certain of its role. This, of course, is only my view. Quite a few people were pleased to see the project collapse. They saw it as a wrong direction.

When Dick left he tried to get hold of the rights, but the rights had sold them to the British White Organization. Film Australia never fully held the rights. All they had was a gentleman's agreement with David Ireland and his agent. There seemed no reason to fear, after all, who would ever want to make a film of such a difficult, uncomfortable book?

Philip Adams had by then teamed up with Dick in an attempt to produce it — but they didn't have the rights. The ABC tried to bring the two parties together, the idea being that Kevin Brookes and David White become executive producers. It sounded great, but the parties couldn't agree on how the film should be made.

People like Philip Adams, Alan Seymour, Dick Mason and myself felt the film should be outrageous and crazy, and not attempt to be a pretentious statement about industrial relations. But the

Brooks White Organization didn't see it that way. Kevin and David were planning a more serious independent film about industrial relations, so, as I believe, some damn money. I am not putting their view down, but it was uncomfortable with ours.

I think Dick has given up hope of working on it, and Kevin and David have gone ahead with plans to purchase the script from Film Australia.

Do you know of any other scripts that have been dropped for political reasons?

The Unknown Industrial Prisoner is the only overtly leftist political film that I have heard of at Film Australia. Other projects have certainly suffered from bureaucratic interference, but that's inevitable without a government filmmaking institution.

MONKEY GRIP

Your new project is to be an adaptation of Helen Garner's *'Monkey Grip'*...

Yes. Almost everything I have been writing on for the past few years has been about real relationships, and that is a side of life I am no longer as interested in portraying. I am much more interested in male-female relationships and sexual politics.

Australian males have difficulty being open with their feelings, especially when dealing with sexuality. That could be why there are so few interesting male characters in Australian film, or at least why they lack the depth you find in European films.

Perhaps, too, I feel much more comfortable working with women, particularly when it comes to writing and discussing a script.

'Monkey Grip' is clearly about an experience quite different to mine. I am married with two kids, and live a very different life from Helen. I felt a certain trepidation about that at first, but it had also attracted me strongly.

I went to Melbourne and met Helen, before spending four months brooding over ways of doing it. The novel isn't obviously cinematic. After *The Unknown Industrial Prisoner* I was wary of adapting another novel, but Helen and I agreed about an approach: I was to develop a structure which we would then discuss before committing ourselves to a screenplay. The changes we have made are important ones, and the film will end up shifting the emphasis to include some of the things Helen chose not to write about.

There was a piece of graffiti which appeared in Carlton after

the book was finished: It read, "Helen Garner has whitewashed her reality." Some people felt the bits she had left out were more important than those she put in....

But *'Monkey Grip'* is fiction — it doesn't have the obligations of an autobiography. It is the universal aspects that interest me, not the supposedly autobiographical details. There is no way I could, or would, just those things back. I could attempt to find out about them, but I am not interested in making a documentary. Helen chose to write a work of fiction, and that's what I am working with.

The book is a post-romantic work in a way. It doesn't concern itself with the changes fiction went through, but picks up at the end of those changes. People who lived with Helen through these changes might feel she has suppressed a vital side of herself, but in order to write you have to say to yourself, "This is what I can reveal, if I reveal any more I will obliterate myself, smother up friendship and destroy the foundations of my life."

What are the changes you have made?

The book is structured like a diary and told in the first person. Consequently, some of the characters are very sketchy, so I have had to do some expanding. But at the moment I am still finding the dramatic shape. Helen and I are working by correspondence (she lives in Paris).

We certainly won't be making *'Pure Shit Part 2'*. Bert Deane already has that territory well staked out. The film will be about love, possession and obsession, and spare about the rock and roll scene that the book set.

You can grow up with rock and

roll in Melbourne. It is much more intelligent and connected to a lifestyle than Sydney rock and roll. That element attracted me enormously and has been expanded.

You said you were interested in the "universal" aspects of the book, but are you taking any account of the experiences which people went through during that period?

The film is being set in the present, and we are cutting loose any things that anchor it to the early 1970s. For example, the making of *Pure Shit*, which figures in the novel, won't be recreated.

Obviously, the relationships that suggest the book aren't directly accessible to me, but I think that's good. We have a hang-up in Australia about first-hand experience, you always have to justify your work by saying, "Yes, I have lived that life."

It is illogical to attack second-hand experience because that, after all, is what a film, or any work of art, is. That attitude is basically a denial of the value of distilled experience.

Some parts of the book refer to a Carlton scene that is quite different to any in Sydney....

Yes. I understand that from conversations with Helen and other people who have lived in that scene. Sydney is full of refugees from that world and I know a few of them quite well. They describe it, over-romantically, as a hot living environment, where a number of relationships overlap, where people change partners quite frequently and have been forced to work out weird group rules. But young people everywhere are

entering a similar style of life, to some degree.

Marriage is beginning to look less and less viable as a life-long experience to most and more people. Nobody wants to deny themselves the experience of other relationships, so they have to find ways to deal with that — and the girl.

'Monkey Grip' was published at the end of a very intense period. These are best opportunities in that set now, and there seems to be a greater concentration on unambiguous relationships....

What did Bert Deane call it — "sexual memoirs"? But as I said, we aren't trying to make a documentary about a particular group of people. It isn't important that, in reality, it may have changed somewhat. If you had lived through it, I am sure it would be so painful that you wouldn't ever want to approach it. That's probably why as one in Melbourne seems to have made a film about this lifestyle.

Who will produce the film?

Pat Lovell. She is very interested in it because she has, in many ways, been through these experiences. Caroline is very similar to Hoffman, though in a less extreme way. The difference is that in Carlton there had been ways of defining the sort of relationship the *Prison Factory*, the newspaper, the literary scene. There is no safe society in Sydney, no feeling that you can run into people you know.

It is going to be an inexpensive film — \$200,000 or so — and be made in the way John Duigan has been making films very low budget, small crew, no big stars. We hope to make it this year. *



Kate Goodwin in the performance, "Ready." Young adolescents are rebellious when they're disappointed. Caroline



Helen Garner, author of *'Monkey Grip'*.

l'Amour en fuite



JEAN-PIERRE LEAUD - MARIE-FRANCE PISIER
CLAUDE JADE - DANI
DOROTH E

EN COMP TITION



FRENCH CINEMA

FRENCH CINEMA IN CRISIS: PART 1

For many, French Cinema is the epitome of cinematic art. A strongly nationalistic industry, it has received wide critical acclaim, even though its movie directors such as François Truffaut, Robert Bresson, Claude Chabrol and Alain Resnais, produce only a small part of its output. High critical regard has a healthy box-office, of course, are not always compatible, and in France this dichotomy has developed into a crisis, with budgets continuing to rise while audiences steadily drop off.

In this first part of a two-part article, E.M. Donnicelli of the School of Modern Languages, Macquarie University takes a probing look at this crisis, analyzing the causes of it and the many measures suggested to avert it.

A year ago this article would have discussed whether French Cinema was in a state of crisis or not, and whether the issues involved were moral, qualitative or economic. It is now too late for such deliberation: the crisis is with us (as evidenced by the 450 "bagnonnats" organized around cinema last year in all parts of the country). Our problem therefore is to examine the various elements of it, the areas in which it is felt, and the possible solutions to it. In the process, some description of cinema's organization in France will be necessary so that one may fully understand the tragic situation that is threatening to destroy an art and industry of great national and international prestige.

The steady decline in attendances is certainly that bit of it. The causes are multiple and complex: television rivalry, problems within the industry, fewer titles abroad, restructured government finance, the mediocre quality of the average film. All these frequently-mentioned complaints, and many more, will form the main body of the investigation.

In conclusion, we will consider the most

recent developments and reflect upon the urgently-needed complete

ATTENDANCES

In the various eras of the present crisis, the most patent cause and effect is, without doubt, the declining attendances. The following table, in which attendance figures are listed approximately in increasing numerical and chronological factors, reveals that since 1960 French cinema has lost more than 30 per cent of its patronage with financial losses of about FF 20 billion (34 million) a year.

YEAR	Attendance Figure	Factor
1960-8	324 million	Quinquennial
1960-9	420 million	10th anniversary
1961	426 million	Reason for normality
1962	432 million	Cinema strike
1963	380 million	Cinema strike

New techniques (larger screens, modernized theatres, etc.) and additional government assistance led to:

1967	421 million	New Wave
1968	372 million	Advent of television
1969	354 million	Exhaustion in most sectors
1970-2	334 million	Television saturation
1973	321 million	Cinema companies
1975	275 million	Flow of art houses
1977	250 million	Flow of art houses

In 1977 there was a severe economic crisis, for the figure of 565 million patrons (a drop of 4.2 per cent on 1976) is the lowest in modern times. Only 14 per cent of the French population now consider cinema as their domestic outing (previously in the 15-34 age bracket), the average number of annual visits per capita has dropped from 9.5 in 1954 to 3.3; and, most startling of all, more than 50 per cent of French people did not go to see a film during 1977.

Figures for 1978 are not yet available, but there seems little cause for optimism from the

first six-month period, while total attendance were up 1.8 per cent that is actually due to there being one more week in that semester than in 1977.

Even more disturbing in this lead of cinematic crisis, the greatest sufferers have been the French full-length feature film, which saw attendances drop 13 per cent in 1977, compared with the previous year. Due to the phenomenal success of *Star Wars* and *The Spy who Loved Me*, American film increased in popularity by 5 per cent. This trend was, if anything, accelerated in 1978 by the country's two greatest box-office hits, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *Saturday Night Fever* (which film also increased in popularity by 47.5 per cent) producing the grim situation in which 30 per cent of French patrons saw an American product, and another 8.5 per cent in an Italian film. In just six years, the French share of the market has fallen almost 9 per cent, and soon less than half the patrons in French cinemas will have been drawn there by a French film.

The whole situation is likely to have adverse effects on the distribution and exhibition systems, for there exists in France a notable sociological phenomenon which reveals that a drop in attendance at French films quickly produces a decline in the popularity of foreign products.

Already, the loss of audience interest has brought about a decrease in the number of seats available. In 1964, France had 5680 cinemas; this has now been reduced to about 4500. Large halls have been demolished to make way for multi-room complexes, providing only five cinemas in the country (two in Paris, one in the suburbs and one in 1250) have more than 2000 seats and only 174 (14 per cent of the total) more than 1000.

Simultaneous with the collapse of cinema caused by the disaffection of the broad public there has been an astounding growth in the number of art-house: 40 in 1964, 492 in 1973, about 800 today (18.5 per cent of the total).

Increasingly tough, reflects a sense of the modern world, does not inspire strong art reasons for the crisis. Even though the issue of making a film, some opened in the last decade, it is difficult to try such films for the current problems are technical deficits, or on the other hand, up of work-indebility by the cinema. The country's films must experience this — Alain Dutoit, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jacques Fieser — are about FF 25 million (1960-1965) a film and a median percentage of the profits (which they also act as producers, own interest in fundraising from the state). A reasonable average for most years would be around FF 1.75 million (1960-1965) and it is by no means uncommon for some well-known performers, though not celebrities, to work for FF 1750 (1960-5) a day or less if they previously like the script. Of the directors, Claude Chabrol claims his fee salary has been up to 1973, for his film *Les amants de M. de Sade*, which he directed FF 1 million (1974-1980) plus 50 per cent of the profits; while others like Claude Chabrol and François Truffaut receive between FF 120-300 (1960-1965), with the majority of filmmakers earning much less.



Robert Bresson directing *Le Diable*, production.



François Truffaut and Nathalie Baye in Truffaut's *Le Chasse d'été*.



Claude Chabrol, seen up a shot, for *Week-end*. Chabrol makes, on average, 200,000 per film.

Bouhassine would have struck that type of cinema to a much larger extent. However, since at the peak of French exhibitors offer for only 18 per cent of the French cinema (with an average occupancy of 22 per cent), they don't represent a serious contribution to the rows of empty seats elsewhere (average occupancy of 18 per cent).

The 5 per cent increase in receipts during 1977 is of little value, for, besides being lower than the overall increase in the cost of living, it stems from the fact that ticket-costs, following an agreement between the cinema profession and the Minister of Finance, went up 6.5 per cent. Certainly, no solution to the present crisis would be found by putting up prices to compensate for declining patronage.

It is not particularly comforting to learn that the world of cinema is suffering from an identical malady — namely, that in the past 15 years the cinema of the European Economic Community have lost 75 per cent of their patronage.

Attendance figures reveal that cinema in France is no longer the popular art form that it was 30 years ago. The situation of cinema has changed radically and there are now very few films seen by a large number of people, only more, made uniquely for the art-house, as seen by a small minority. The latter may be very interesting, but it is every bit a minority interest.

CRISES

The present economic crisis is not, however, the first that French cinema has undergone. In the past, economic campaigns, led by studios before involved in the industry, have always come to the rescue. In the immediate post-war period France found herself flooded by American films and her autochthonous fervor was in danger of becoming seriously diluted.

As attendances at French productions began to plummet, the Government stepped in, and, in September 1946, a new law imposed a 25 per cent tax on the receipts from foreign films, plus surcharges on entry-tickets and premiums. These taxes represented the first example of government assistance (*l'aide de l'Etat*), and continued until 1952, when the famous *Fonds de soutien* (Support Fund) was introduced.

The steep fall in attendances around 1952, due simply to the outdated content and melodrama of well-known directors now bereft of originality and imagination, was

2 The notable exception is the U.S. where horror and science-fiction films attract serious, even sophisticated and mature mature audiences from independent buyers at their highest level since the end of World War 2.



Pour qu'il soit attentif à cette place-ci...

Les exhibiteurs ont pu enlever le nombre de places qu'ils ont pu consacrer à la diffusion d'un film. Les exhibiteurs ont pu enlever le nombre de places qu'ils ont pu consacrer à la diffusion d'un film. Les exhibiteurs ont pu enlever le nombre de places qu'ils ont pu consacrer à la diffusion d'un film.



Il suffit de lui promettre celle-là.

Les exhibiteurs ont pu enlever le nombre de places qu'ils ont pu consacrer à la diffusion d'un film. Les exhibiteurs ont pu enlever le nombre de places qu'ils ont pu consacrer à la diffusion d'un film. Les exhibiteurs ont pu enlever le nombre de places qu'ils ont pu consacrer à la diffusion d'un film.

Il leur faut reconnaître qu'il s'agit d'un cinéma à deux degrés de complexité. Le cinéma est un art complexe.

Quand on aime le vie, on va au cinéma.

reversed by technical advances such as Cinemascope and Technicolor. Afford with New Wave's modernization of theme and form, this technical revolution brought the people back to the cinema. They started then to feel the creative influence of television from 1955 onwards.

The crisis of the 1960s (58 per cent attendance drop between 1958 and 1970) was accentuated by the French being more affluent than before within the expansion of the economic industry and of country residences (the "weekend away from home" syndrome) and, more pertinently perhaps, the installation of television sets in most households. Once again the Government intervened, with the Cabinet appointing a disinterested general of cinema to work under the Minister for Culture in all the branches of the industry.

Three important steps were taken. A prohibition of "youth and family" films was adopted, and cinema shows in film festivals were lower taxes (this relief lasted until 1970) when Value Added Tax was unfortunately applied to the cinema, thus ending a very

"When you love life, you go to the cinema" is a statement from the promotional campaign designed to attract a declining but still active.

successful experiment? Taxes were also reduced for art-house, a prime reason for their rapid expansion. Thirdly, the laws governing the private and very popular *cinéma de genre* were tightened up, summing showings to prevent financial members, allowing them to present only "valuable" films and forcing them to wait four years before being able to show commercially-successful films.

Such contradictory measures, effective only to a limited extent, could not avert the grave situation that faced the cinema industry as the new decade dawned. Half the existing cinemas were closed, and those remaining open operated at half-price. 90 per cent of the cinema-going public preferred to watch a foreign film: money was scarce and unemployment widespread. The industry was desperate and, as a last resort, it was left to one vital sector of the industry — the exhibitors, rather than the Government — to find the panacea.

At their 1971 National Congress, the exhibitors vowed their main grievance: not enough freedom in ticket-costs (fixated since 1963), while prices and inflation had been rising all round; excessive taxation; and a lack of state assistance for the struggling independent exhibitor. Not content to remain passive, the exhibitors counter-attacked the falling attendances by going out in search of a new public, particularly in the Paris suburbs. They became industrial businessmen.

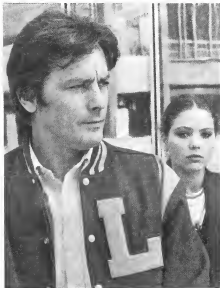
Market research led to a new concept of films (instead of 800 seats and one screen, cinemas were to combine four smaller halls offering the spectator a choice. The "hot card" was lengthened, providing a 5 per cent reduction to pensioners. A heavy publicity campaign, costing FF 3 million (\$1 million), was mounted in the slogan "Quand on aime le vie,



Marguerite Duras, author and director of *Le venin*.



Claude Sautet: whose most successful film includes *Chaos* et *Beauté et les choses de la vie*.



King Delon and Ornella Muti in Gwyneth Llewellyn's *Mane*. Delon earns about \$400,000 per film.

on or on cinema" ("What you love life, you go to the cinema") appeared everywhere — indeed, this catchphrase was so successful "that it is still in use."

These efforts were not in vain — attendance rose 2.3 per cent in 1972, though the success was short-lived. The problems of the early 1970s are still very real today, exacerbated no doubt by the internal disputes occurring between the industry's various segments, all armed with their own political, personal arguments. As the actor Bernard Blier said recently:

"The disease which is currently afflicting French cinema stems from the fact that with us all those who are involved in the profession hate each other, whereas in Italy everybody finds jointly responsible and as you get a certain solidarity."³

To understand the pernicious effects such sentimentality and divided subjectivity can have, it is necessary to examine briefly the production, distribution and exhibition sectors of the industry.

As the saying from films starts in the hands of the exhibitor, he is the one, according to present laws, who notes the gross: immediate rewards though he would no doubt dispute this claim. The producer, once he has paid the V.A.T., the programmer and the distributor find any moneys relating to government loans, collect only 17 per cent of the box-office receipts.

In this unfavorable and unpredictable economic climate where of the FF 660 million (\$125 million) invested in 1970 only FF 120 million (\$25 million) was recovered, the producer's personality changes. Finding it is too risky to make a medium-budget film — say FF 5 million (\$1 million) — which has neither star nor famous director, he adopts one of two courses. Conforming to the ethics of Hollywood, fleeing his cultural nationality and aiming for the large movie circuit, he may over-spend on a formidable cast and selected director, and thereby increase his chances of the

expected floods of not remunerative.

One case is the rather terrible of big-budget production in France, Christian Fauré, who must have very prodigious luck and brains.

On Calman Fauré suffered a disastrous loss of FF 6 million (\$1.25 million) but this was quickly recouped with the successful *L'effie en la nuit* (Léon de Pire) however, his latest film, *L'animal* (Jean-Paul Belmondo and Romy Schneider), to which he had committed a large amount of personal finance, equally quickly plunged him back into huge debt.

Many producers, however, are realizing the error of such ways and have begun to operate on reduced budgets of FF 4 million (\$830,000) maximum. In 1975, for example, there were only four or five worthwhile big budget films. This, in part, is because conservative French producers have never succeeded internationally.

If famous actors and top technical teams are no insurance against flop, it is equally true that low-budget films can enjoy considerable success. In the past two years, France's weekly "Top Ten" has included numerous films made for less than FF 3 million (\$625,000).

Hopefully, such developments will stimulate international interest, for recently sales abroad have slumped to an alarming low. The success of Coward, however, is impossible to that of *Et Dieu créa la femme*, 2, and *Un homme et une femme*, France's real post-war best, was short-lived, in fact only about a dozen films prospered abroad.

Most disturbingly, international contracts, already on the wane in 1970, were down a further 6 per cent. Receipts fell accordingly (by 28 per cent) and now only 10 per cent of the country's total cinema revenue comes from sales abroad.

Faced with the demands of producers preoccupied by "remuneration," demands which often amount upon their artistic ideal, about 200 directors have formed limited companies to produce their own projects. This will, no doubt, intensify the making of the film, but the director may find himself in conflict with more distribution problems.

For their part, some actors (including Alain Delon, Jean-Paul Belmondo and Philippe Noiret) have become, to a larger or smaller extent, producers. Michel Poledon has already co-produced three films, generally making up 75 per cent of the finance and leaving the rest to some joint company like Gaumont. His success with *L'été sauvage* and *Des enfants sales* will encourage others to follow.

More radically, the latest idea to gain acceptance is that everybody concerned with the film, from star to grip, should be a co-producer, receiving the same salary and percentage of the profits. The outcome of such ventures, in direct contrast as they are with the well-established production companies (five or six) and a dozen smaller ones, remains uncertain.

Since the early 1970s, when the market research conducted by the exhibitors revealed that after six months many films were no longer viable, the three largest production companies have entered and actually monopolized distribution and exhibition. UGC-Financ was born in 1971 with the union of 150 small exhibitors, mainly from the provinces. They bought the national Union Générale Cinématographique back from the Government, thus acquiring about 30 per cent of the market. Since then business has been bright, with 60 screens at 14 different sites, and a record turnover of FF 90 million (\$18.75 million) in 1971.

3. Quoted in "Elevé Invention à Professions," *Paris Match*, May 5, 1973, p. 36 (author's translation).

FRENCH CINEMA

CLAUDE LELOUCH

Claude Lelouch became internationally known as a director with his enormously successful *Un homme et une femme* (A Man and a Woman). Since then, Lelouch has faded from critical attention; many critics considering his films trivially obsessed with romanticism in a time when politics is real to godfathers.

This attitude unfortunately blinds the significance of Lelouch's finer films (*Tout va venir* in particular), and ignores Lelouch's many studies of the law, and the role of gangsters in confronting it. Taking this issue as a starting point, Claude Lelouch talks to Steve McMillan and Narcissa Venderlip about his attitude to life and filmmaking.

You have depicted various kinds of gangsters in your films, usually sympathetically. How does this relate to your feelings towards the law?

I don't like rules and regulations. I know they are necessary — we might tear each other apart without them — but I am not going to like them just because they are necessary.

I believe life is made up only of particular cases, and it isn't honest to generalize everyone to the same regime. Unfortunately, I haven't found any better solution.

Very often I have deep desires to do forbidden, crazy things. For instance, I made a short film about a car racing through Paris at dawn which lost me my driver's license for two months. With the idea of making a film, I gave myself a delicious moment of doing something forbidden.

I think this feeling is as old as the world. Children do over the world dream about it. That is why I like children.

To explain what is forbidden, anyone watching films is faced to go through gangsters. They are the group which has best expressed a reaction to the forbidden. Since everything is forbidden to the gangster, he needs twice as much imagination to do honest men to survive. That imagination is what fascinates me.

Several of your films show a protagonist in jail. What are your feelings about that during shooting?

It is what I say is one of my films, prison can be the best school, and the worst. To be deprived of freedom is the worst thing that can happen to a person. Until you have been in jail, you have no idea of the meaning of "freedom", a word which is made dirty by everyone from politicians up.

When I was very young I went to jail for a week. That week cracked me enormously and gave me the taste for freedom because those who have been to jail cannot be the same afterwards. Everything they then do as life they feel is a gift.

In *"The Good and the Bad"* you dealt with acts of violence,



Greatest Claude Lelouch during the filming of *Another Man, Another Chance*.

perhaps for the first time. What were your feelings about that during shooting?

Violence is necessary — it is an outlet, just like bad moods. I am not a violent man, and I don't like so film violence. In *The Good and the Bad*, the violence is not something out of my imagination. It is something that actually took place. It was, in fact, more drastic than what I imagined. I was more the witness — a kind of a documentary reporter.

"Another Man, Another Chance" is a Western, which is a traditionally violent genre. How were you able to deal with violence?

What is interesting is that it is not a Western although it has all the elements of one — the horses,

the setting, the old towns, the props, the story unfolding in a certain way. In all, it is a story that could have taken place in the West. But I tried to evoke it without reference to violence, telling myself that there must have been people in the West who were not violent.

Violence has been played up in Westerns to the degree where we feel that the day a person arrives in the West, he or she becomes violent. A dramatic mythology has distorted the facts. I wanted to show the other side.

Do you feel that your ideas on gangsters have evolved?

I don't like bad guys on a private basis. It is just that they are the only characters I have found in 20th Century mythology who have a certain kind of courage.

They attempt things which the average man would never dare do in the street.

I am not saying that killing a person or robbing a bank is a beautiful or nice thing, but at least it is an act of courage. This courage is what we miss most today. We are living in a frightened world where we are afraid of the policemen, the reporter, the teacher, our wives and children, of the political regime — even afraid on the highway.

Society is being completely traumatized, because there is an increasing number of us, and more and more rules are created. "Be Careful" is written everywhere. I think in about 100 years, everything will be forbidden. We will not even be able to make love when we feel like it, we will have to do it at certain times and in certain places.

The simpler, even though he is no friend of mine, does offer an alternative to this constrictive.

What interested you in the story of *"Cat and Mouse"*, your detective thriller?

Cat and Mouse is a film I made solely for the pleasure of filming. Throughout most of it the camera represents the point of view of one of the characters. I wanted to see how it would vary not to play a classic police thriller subjectively. In other words, I took a standard story and treated it in an original way.

As far as this goes, I think I learned a few things about that style of filming.

"The Good and the Bad" is a very strange film about World War 2...



Yves-Marcel Grand, William (Steve McMillan) who makes it plus real from horse-back. Another Man, Another Chance.

In Europe, everyone suffered enormously from the war, all those who were born before or during the war will never forget those years. I know that I will make other films about the war, though I hope the intervals between the films will be such that I don't bore people.

There is a whole generation now that has not lived through those horrors. It might be lucky, but then again it might not. For if it had been alive then, it might be more tolerant, more understanding.

Regardless of what governments we live under now, or what politics we are familiar with, I like the times I am living in, because they are times without war — at least not world war. I don't give a damn that there are inequalities between men, or that there are privileges.

The only thing I ask of the societies who govern us is to avoid war by all means. I think all those who lived through the last war will want to avoid another, and I am afraid of all the younger people who come to power without having seen that war, like we saw it in Europe, with all its horror, genocide and random violence.

Then prices are going up, natural resources are becoming limited and profits are being reduced. It is not serious. War is the worst calamity that can occur in a nation, because it brings starvation, death, the destruction of homes and families, and of people who love each other. It brings on the destruction of the most important values, whereas an economic crisis only shakes people up. Inflation forces them to find new ideas, but in war there are no remedies.

"Another Man, Another Chance" could in certain ways be called "A Man and a Woman Part II." Why do a remake instead of something completely new and original?

Family, I thought it would be fun to do my own cinema. There has never been doing before in the history of cinema; another director has always got the job of remaking a film. Secondly, doing *Another Man, Another Chance* allowed me to reassess my own progress.



Jean-Claude Lévesque and Jean-Claude Guillemin in the couple-to-be in *Another Man, Another Chance*.



David Gribble

When I made *A Man and a Woman* I promised myself that, if it were a success, I would remake it 10 years later. I am now making the same promise with *Another Man, Another Chance*.

Since in every decade there is a new generation of men and women who have not seen the previous version, I can work to please them. Anyway, I am convinced that most people will not remember they saw a similar story in *A Man and a Woman*.

I think this film is better made than *A Man and a Woman*, so I feel I have progressed. Hopefully, the spectators will get more pleasure out of the new version, maybe he will get less. Perhaps I have become less accessible — that is always possible.

David Goldsmann says in "And now my love" that the sons of the Americans promote no longer have the pioneering spirit of their fathers. Do you still believe this after working in the U.S. for several months?



Francis Lelievre in the film and official husband of Jean-Claude Lévesque in *Another Man, Another Chance*.

Yes. The pioneering spirit means being forced to take risks, but American society is now based in such a way as to permanently reduce the risk of all its citizens, be it behind the steering wheel of his car or at the bank where he takes out a loan.

By the games of lawyers, economists and market analysts, American risks are becoming smaller and smaller. You don't even risk investing a part of risk this comes right from a loan. If it is not homogenized and patterned, you won't drink it. You alternate to the minimum. And this is the reason that took the greatest and the most beautiful of all risks by founding and building an entire country in just 200 years.

I think Americans today are living on their ancestors' reputation, in French the same way that a rich man's son relies on his father's reputation. And if the U.S. continues not to take risks, I am afraid she is going to lose some of her strength.

For example, we have just made a film here, all you have to do is compare the thickness of our Americans' contracts to the thickness of French contracts to understand that Americans want nature as safe and predictable as possible.

I am also fascinated by how much more you are afraid of pollution than we are in France. We get tired at eyes. We're tired there through the road challenge them, and refuse to show them our

Francis Lelievre stands in the place to remember the presence of a woman who, *Another Man, Another Chance*.

papers. It is not like that here.

But I am not here to criticize you, since I love your country more and more, and I feel more at ease here than in France.

"A Man and a Woman" demonstrates your enthusiasm for the theme of two people meeting each other. "Marriage" primarily deals with what happens afterwards. Do you believe marriage always stifles romance and personal growth?

Yes, but as with most other things I believe there are only particular cases. It is not so much marriage that destroys things as living together, which, at a certain point, reaches intention level.

Why does a person ever choose someone in the first place? I think it is because someone laughs and cries at the same time, and possibly even wants some things. That is the attraction part. Then they decide to live together, and what happens is that they see up these common things very quickly so they start to repeat themselves, he or she always defends the same idea, or maybe always dresses the same way, always wants to do the same things on Sundays, on Sundays on Monday. All in all, he or she tries to make acquired ideas last.

Continued on p. 121

THE AUSTRALIAN FILM FESTIVAL IN

On November 27, 1978, the Australian Film Office, Inc. (the United States affiliate of the New South Wales Film Corporation) opened the first ever Australian Film Festival in New York City at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. Prompted by the increasing attention paid to Australian films at last year's Cannes Film Festival, as well as by the interest generated by *Newfront* being the first ever Australian film selected for the New York Film Festival last September, it is expected that the AFO Inc. and the New South Wales Film Corporation will follow it up with another festival in Los Angeles sometime this year.

The president of the AFO Inc., Samuel Gelfman, spelled out the rationale behind the staging of the Festival, saying that its primary function was to demonstrate to the American film community — the marketing and consumer organizations — that there existed a highly skilled, productive industry in Australia. These films, Gelfman continued, could compete, and do compete, on the world market.

The Festival was also staged to sell films, and announcements are expected within a few weeks on the placement with U.S. distributors of *Newfront* and *The Night The Prowler*, both of which were represented in the U.S. by Gelfman's office.

The selection of films in the Festival comprised *Sunday Too Far Away*, *Storm Boy*, *The Devil's Playground*, *In Search of Anna*, *The Night The Prowler*, *The Slayer and the Dancer*, *Backroads*, *The PJ Holden*, *Forty Thousand Horses*, *The Sentimental Bloke*, *The Greeting of Wisdom*, *Cadille and Newfront*, *As Pearly*, *Pearly at Healing Rock*, *The Last Wave* and *The Picture Show Man* have U.S. deals — and in two cases were close to their release date — they were not included. The selection otherwise represented a cross-section of the Australian films produced over the past eight years (with the obvious exception of the classical — the period generally referred to as a revival, if not a renaissance).

Organized by Gelfman and David Robe of the New South Wales Film Corporation, the Festival was able to generate considerable publicity. Reaction to the films was almost wholly favorable, and *Cinema Papers* reports that extracts from a number of the reviews that appeared in the New York printed media (there was also much undocumented television and radio publicity.)

Dan Yaker and Seth Cagin, *The Solo Weekly News*, November 23, 1978.

"The '70s have witnessed a renaissance of several national cinemas — in Germany, in Quebec, and in various African nations, among others. The first glimpse of a flourishing Australian cinema is offered by the primitive inheritance of feature films which comprise the Australian Film Festival. After more than a 30-year slumber, the Australian film industry is emerging as a major cinematic movement that, apart from being uniquely Australian in its thematic preoccupations, also manifests a refreshingly non-derivative stylistic eclecticism. American audiences may well find in Australian films the cultural treat that they have come to associate with the best European films, without having to deal with the barrier of a foreign language.

The festival entries, without exception, display a rebelliousness against a deeply rooted, bourgeois value system and its oppression of the individual. Jim Sharman's *The Night The Prowler* is a devastating yet compassionate depiction of a young woman's desperate struggle for sexual autonomy denied her by a nurturing suburban culture. Like the heroine of Claude Chabrol's *Violette*, Felicity (Kerry Walker) is oppressed by an over-protective, domineering mother and a complicated father who wish to sculpt their daughter into a model of middle-class respectability, a rapid pace which requires sexual passivity. Felicity's rebellion is deliciously unconventional, for she boldly enters an active role within the secret world that she both discovers and invents. In the dark places of an artist's wounded soul finds refuge, here too, however, she must struggle to be accepted on her own terms."

Norma McLain Stoop, *After Dark*.

"The *Night The Prowler* is a strange, eerie incursion into the mind of Felicity, the pudgy, insecure young daughter of bourgeois parents who, though this film is Sydney, Australia, would feel equally at home in Claude Chabrol's France. Actually, the film is more a daring indictment of the worldwide middle-class morality and mentality than the story of a desperate, strong-minded girl pushed from childhood into the confines of a strict color-mold of gentleness and submission that cannot contain her nature. It is a tightly directed film that flashes at nothing, and in it Patrick

White, who wrote the screenplay from his own short story, displays the genius that won him the Nobel Prize. Gutsy, funny, horrifying and tragic, it is thought to frighteningly reveal life through the controlled aiming of Ruth Cracknell and John Fowley as the father and mother, and the terrified passion of Kerry Walker's performance as the daughter. Director Jim Sharman is in the driver's seat all the way, and David Sanderson's austere photography is exemplary. This film should certainly be distributed in the U.S., because its content is universal and its execution is excellent."

Robe, *Variety*, November 15, 1978.

"Australian film director Jim Sharman has had a measure of success with midnight filmgoers with his Rocky Horror Picture Show. His latest effort *The Night The Prowler* is even more confusing. Sharman evidently thinks of himself as the Down Under Alberto Fedelesky and, certainly, his films have that touch of the surreal that mark El Topo.

"A hedge-podge of flash-forwards, flash-backs and even some flash sideways, it tells the story, in one painful act, of a female adolescent's search for self-identification."

Torn Sullivan *Pitt-Gazette* (Pittsburgh, Pa.), November 30, 1978.

"This Australia has a small but dynamic movie industry comes as a surprise to many, but next week our film buffs will have a chance to sample two vintage classics and 13 teeny productions from Down Under.

"Perhaps the most outstanding film in the series is *The Devil's Playground*. The 'playground' referred to is a postsecondary school for adolescent boys, staffed by Christian Brothers, not priests, more a male equivalent of the more familiar teaching nuns. In stretch dormitory Scholastic meets the severe religious of the boys as they emerge from childhood, and his sharp pen and all-seeing camera eye find time to look in on the not dissimilar problems of the brothers, too.



"Newfound" is wise, credible and a highlight.

"Director Michael Tharnhill must surely have embarked upon *F.I. Holden* after seeing American Graffiti, and decided a reflected story aspects of life in Sydney's middle class suburbs. A very satisfying film, if also a very curvy one, with lots of soul long ago."

"The Getting of Wisdom is also worthy of commercial release here. Bruce Beresford directed with a fine touch and Kenneth Fowle as the multi-faceted heroine Laura is superb."

"Caddy" effectively recreates the look and feel of the depression era when the heroine, a middle-aged mother of two (Helen Mirren), leaves her philandering husband and goes off to support herself and the kids. To do so, she becomes a maid, and her story is one that will leave no one unmoved."

"Newfound" is the final film of the series. At the New York Festival, Noyce bitterly told reporters that he felt Australia had been subjugated by American influences and had to incorporate anti-American themes in the movie, and with considerable acknowledgment from audiences Down Under."

Norma McLean Stoop, *After Dark*.

"I found *Sunday Too Far Away* completely engrossing, but I'm not sure it has the ingredients for successful feature distribution in the U.S. Its story and its danger is that it is totally Australian."

"Ken Hensman's direction is (mostly) nothing much really happens, yet by the end of the film we know the country, understand the culture of the extremely racist man who spend much long weeks cooped up together till the job is done, and we are not only familiar with the work they do but why they choose to do it. Jack Thompson's performance as Billy, a pacifist, loyal, pitiful, drunken sheep-shearer, is a stand-out, but I must admit that, in the film, it's often hard to understand the Australian aspect. I should thank this *Sunday Too Far Away*'s quasi-documentary style would find its most enthusiastic audience as a PBS special."



"The Devil's Playground, a comedy if the town original story."

Charles Swearing, *Daily News*
November 10, 1978

"The Getting of Wisdom is the best school film I have ever seen. The responsible screenplay was adapted from the novel of Henry Handel Richardson, pen name of Ethel Richardson (1879-1946), who was the daughter of an Australian bush immigrant doctor. It reflects her unhappy childhood and life with irrepressible spoiled schoolgirls at a Melbourne Ladies' College. It has an absolutely first rate cast."

Archer Winston, *New York Post*,
November 26, 1978.

"The Australians are trying to generate international excitement for their film industry, and to establish a world market. Judging from a generous sample of the Australian Film Festival. They just may succeed."

"*Sunday Too Far Away* is very solid work, strong on realism, deeply rooted in actual people, devoid of artistic pretension and tricks of the cinematic art group. At times one could wish for English subtitles... but the gist of what's happening is always clear."

"The Getting of Wisdom is a beautifully conceived and acted portrait of the artist in a young girl. Kenneth Fowle in the lead role is unforgettable, and director Bruce Beresford deserves the praise he has already won."

"In *The Night the Power*, with its extraordinarily split personality — one moment an over-aged girl is seeking rape to her estranged parents, the next arrayed in leather garments and prowling the night — our heroine makes an impression as rich and raw as character that can be shared to Australian movie-lovers."

"What *The Night the Power* shows us is an extraordinarily broad, detailed look at life in Australia, remarkably devoid of sick, movie distortions of the commercial theatre. This is not to suggest that the Australians have stolen a march on Hollywood and the rest of the movie-making world. What it does mean is that they are able to put their best artistic foot forward by selection in accordance with the simple criteria of realism and the real world, and let's not make it pretty."



"The Getting of Wisdom is the best school film I have seen."

Charles Ryweck, *The Hollywood Reporter*, November 29, 1978

"The Getting of Wisdom is an absorbing film with outstanding production values, and is one more indication that the Australians have come of age as filmmakers."

Diane Jacobs, *Post*, November 27, 1978

"Before Philip Noyce's wry, satirical, and altogether extraordinary *Newfound* arrived as the first Australian film ever selected for the New York Film Festival (in October, the 1976 *Mad Dog* was the only Australian-made film in ceremony to travel here — and we welcome did not encourage anyone in search of a new national cinema."

"The quality ranges, as might be expected, from superb to mediocre. *Getting of Wisdom*, *The Singer and the Dancer*, for instance, is a tricky and masterfully intelligent film about sexual rapport between a self-playing older and a self-absorbed younger woman, while *Newfound* — also a story of generations — is wise, insightful, and a highlight not only of this, but of the New York and Cannes Festivals as well."

"Few of the festival's other films are as balanced or provocative, but while certain general preconceptions are shattered — a distinction with genre, concern with relationships between whites and aborigines — they are hardly not of a piece and are on the whole well worth seeing."

"Two of the most intriguing selections are a graceful film about cultural beauty and craft people called *Sunrise*, and *The Night the Power*, a bizarre tale of suspected rape and revenge. Set in contemporary Sydney, *The Night the Power* has a Luchino look, and the early scenes — showing a flimsy mother and her plump, unwidely seeking daughter — are filled with black humor and social satire. Compared to Sydney, Robert Altman's *Middle America* seems a bacchanal, and *Shamans* and *White* make wonderful fun of the closure of Australian bourgeois society."

"The second half of the film — with *Philly* now a predator in black, hunting down preachers, ripping up neighboring homes, and continuing to talk about his fate — does not quite come off, but it's an admirable attempt."

Concluded on P. 221

1. Public Broadcast Systems tabernacle.





Jim

SHARMAN

Best known as an innovative theatrical producer, here and abroad, Jim Shorman has directed productions of "Hair", "King Lear", "As You Like It", "The Rocky Horror Show", and two Patrick White plays, "A Season at Sarsaparilla" and "Big Toys".

Moving to filmmaking, Shorman's first feature was the experimental "Shirley Thompson versus the Aliens", which was followed by "The Rocky Horror Picture Show", and "Summer of Secrets". His latest film, "The Night The Prowler", is from an original screenplay by Patrick White.

Shorman had just returned from the New York Film Week, where "The Night The Prowler" had screened, when he spoke with Robyn Andersen and Sue Adler. Shorman begins by discussing his first film, "Arcade".

EARLY DAYS

My first film was made with Gary Brand, the producer; it was a five-minute tape called *Arcade* and charted the demise of a jukebox in a glossy Sydney shopping arcade. The first feature was *Shirley Thompson versus the Aliens*, made for \$20,000 around the time of Tim Burton's *Shark* and Bruce Kivvich's *A City's Child*. It was made quite capriciously, and not without passion.

Looking back it is hard to imagine how it was made, but I remember being very impressed by a remark Joseph von Sternberg made when he passed through Australia to attend a film festival. Most people, in town as they step off a plane, are asked, "Well, what do you think of Australia?" In Von Sternberg's case he was asked, "Why doesn't Australia have a film industry?" His reply was, "I don't know, you have cinema, haven't you?" There is still a lot in that remark.

Shirley Thompson was made as an underground film and it developed a sort of cult reputation on a small scale. Curiously, one of the original criticisms of that film was over its setting in the 1940s. It was one of the first films to me that proved as a watershed for a post-war generation. Since then, of course, nostalgia has accelerated to a point where you are expected to be nostalgic about everything.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show followed in Britain in 1975. Based on the stage musical I had directed in London, it delved into the area of the Frankenstein and Dracula myths. People have always made films in this area, and I think there are four *Dracula* films being made at present. The only one I will have any interest in, however, is Werner Herzog's remake of *Nostradamus*. I saw

Frederick Murnau's *Nostradamus* years ago, and it was quite influential.

Anyway, *Summer of Secrets* concluded my career as a director. It was a film that was written as a Gothic melodrama, though I was also interested in the theme of memory, which is very strong in the film. It turned out to be a serious film, but I made it simply as a Gothic melodrama; it might have been more popular.

"*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*" has built up a cult following, particularly in the U.S. What is your reaction to that?"

It is quite extraordinary. The film did very little business in its first release, but became quite a success on its second. I was very surprised, because you tend to think that if a film hasn't succeeded on its first release, then that's the end. The last thing you would expect it for to be playing 120 theatres across the U.S. four years later.

Apparently people are responding to the film as if it were theatre...

I think they are responding to it more as if it were a kind of living wallpaper — people are actually taking back to the film. I think most American audiences, generally very young, are treating the film as motivation for a party. I attended one of the New York screenings and it was extraordinary to see upstairs and audience members dressing up, and the hierarchy of who sat where, depending on how many screenings they had attended. It was crazy enough not to be happening in the way clubs and big clubs can be, and the really witty dialogue they swapped with

the screen made for a pretty amazing night.

I went with Phil Noyce, he would be better to discuss it with, because I was preoccupied with seeing a film that was made as a homage to the late-night movie becoming the ultimate in late-night movies.

In filmmaking your major interest, or do you mainly regard it as another medium in which you can work?

I am pursuing filmmaking, but not at the expense of everything else. There is a certain other that implies, "back of all trades and master of none", and occasionally I have been accused of making theatrical films and producing cinematic stage productions but enjoy working in different mediums.

My predominant interest is visual interpretation. The success of many of my early stage productions was based on the visual impact, and this was often fed by the cinema. Obviously there are very different considerations, but they do inform each other. For instance, if you have worked in cinema you bring to film an ease of working with actors.

Do you think people resent you coming from one medium to another?

It can be a problem in that if you are successful in one medium people expect you will naturally achieve the same success in another. They tend to forget that you probably had many attempts in the first medium before you reached any degree of success.

So, while in some ways you come with advantages, you also come with liabilities — particularly those related to people's expectations.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show is a case in point, in it was filmed straight after the stage production. Musicals are usually left for several years before they are filmed, this probably explains why my film took off in 1978, and not in 1974.

THE NIGHT THE PROWLER

How did you come to choose "The Night The Prowler"?

As a writer, Patrick White has worked in several mediums: he is primarily a novelist, but he is also a playwright, and a few a play-writer. I remember seeing his plays in the early 1960s and being greatly influenced by them. It was the first time I had seen anything that I could relate to in terms of being an Australian.



You have produced several plays of Patrick White...

Yes. The Season at Sarsaparilla was my first association with Patrick, after that I did Big Toys. Actually, it was out of our conversations on Season at Sarsaparilla that the idea developed to film The Night The Prowler. He thought the story would make a good film, so I asked him whether he was interested in writing the screenplay.

Although there had been other film projects associated with Patrick White's works, no one had ever involved him in the screenplay. But much has writing was so visual — I think we share a frustration for painting — I was sure it would be an interesting experience.

The film then crystallized over the period from The Season at Sarsaparilla to Big Toys.

Did you collaborate with White on the screenplay?

There were two drafts. Patrick did the first and I had the normal director collaboration — namely, reading it over, discussing certain items, with Patrick modifying it according to our discussions. This became the second draft.

The normal processes of filming and editing followed, and there were the usual further alterations.

What were the problems associated with adapting this

particular literary work to the cinema?

They were lesser than if I had adapted a novel. Usually it is the style of writing in a novel that makes it tedious. So if you decide to film it, you have to be confident you can generate a visual style that will equal the prose style. Secondly, of course, you have to allow for the natural impulse of people to say, "It's not as good as the book."

With short stories, however, you don't have that problem, because people don't feel so protective about them. They are lighter works in style and it is not so much a holy text situation.

When I read the screenplay of The Night The Prowler I thought it was a remarkable piece of writing for the screen. I never had any doubts about it.

Did you make many changes to the story?

There are, of course, things in the film that aren't in the story. With a novel you have to decide what details you should discard, with a short story the situation is reversed — you have to expand things.

In The Night The Prowler there is a cocktail party scene which is not in the story. That came out of conversation with Patrick, we agreed that it would be good for Harvey, the central character, to have a cinematic experience before his last journey

The Director (Arthur Penn) and Ken (Neil Campbell) on the central beach in Season at Sarsaparilla. Though a commercial failure in America, the film has gained considerable critical acclaim overseas.

into the park.

In White's story, the prowler scene is vital to know what is going on in Harvey's mind. How did you translate that scene to the screen?

One of the big differences between the written word and cinema is that you can articulate a state of mind very clearly with the written word, you can be inside the character and be subjective to their thinking. The main device for that in the cinema is the close-up, though there are other devices, such as music. With



Ken (Neil Campbell) and Harvey (Arthur Penn) in The Night The Prowler. The film has gained considerable critical acclaim overseas.



Ann Emerson and Ruth Crawford on the set of *The Night the Prowler*.

make you can generate emotional empathy with a character or situation.

In many ways, the power sequence in your film is ambiguous. Was that deliberate?

It is an interesting scene, in that it is really the first scene, even though it comes two-thirds of the way through. Up to that point, there is a obvious suspense and you believe that the attack has taken place. That scene reveals it hasn't, and further compounds our sense of Felicity's frustration.

The confrontation also gives Felicity the chance to break with her background and break off her

engagement. It is the turning point in the film.

However, the central confrontation in the film is not that with the prowler, but with the old man at the end.

But the confrontation with the prowler does explain why the film takes place...

Yes, and obviously such an attack, as it is described at the beginning of the film, would be traumatic in the extreme, the reality is painful. In that sense, the confrontation merely increases her already profound discrimination.

The point you make about the credibility of the awakening seems to occur too swiftly...

Throughout the film I tried to prepare the audience for what was to come. The long at the beginning is of domestic comedy, but as the other themes emerge, the film becomes serious and mythic. The film then becomes something of an odyssey as Felicity assesses a larger-than-life character in her quest.

Felicity goes through all different layers of society and evaluates different attitudes, until she finally achieves, in the most unlikely of situations, some comprehension of compassion. Till then, her life has been devoid of passion. This is largely because of her environment. It is only when Felicity discovers kindly that she finds compassion. That is why, contrary to a lot of opinion, I consider the film to be optimistic. By coming to terms with herself, Felicity emerges strengthened. Her journey has been a fruitful one.

Unfortunately, it is a journey that not many people of this society are interested in taking. Most people accept something less for themselves, and tend to reject anything implying that their way of life isn't necessarily the best.

Perhaps Felicity is exceptional, in that most people are never placed under such intolerable circumstances. They are not, therefore, forced to rebel against them...

Perhaps, but people are the product of their environments. In Felicity's case, it has reached an extremity, and the means by which she seeks to escape are extreme.

There are, however, certain aspects of the film that are basic to many adolescents. For example, the secret of Felicity's escape through the house is psychologically related to a latent desire to destroy her environment. Now that is something which is very strong in many people's minds, even though they never act it out.

Indeed, if you want to explore the psychology of the Bender Member gang and Patsy Blair,

you would find that they come from the same middle-class backgrounds that Felicity Barranger comes from.

There is an element of irony in the film...

I think the humor in the film is heavily laden with irony, yet that irony is not detached from compassion.

Ruth Cracknell, for example, gives an extraordinary performance as Dora Barranger, and it is a role in which many actresses would have gone overboard. While Ruth doesn't miss the comic opportunities, she doesn't betray the essence of her character to that comedy.

You apparently had difficulty selecting an actress for the role of Felicity. Was this because you had a concept about the character that was difficult to meet?

Having grown up in Sydney's eastern suburbs and knowing many people in that situation, I had a good idea of the character, but had no actress in mind. All I knew was that I needed somebody who could sustain the entire film with her performance. It needed someone with a hidden passion who would be able to convey certain emotions without resorting to words.

Most of the actresses I auditioned didn't have this well of passion, or the capacity to communicate it to the camera.

Do you have strong views on how to work with the actors, especially with your background in the theatre?

It was important to establish the Barrangers as a family, so we had a period before filming during which Ruth, Kerry and John (the Barranger family) worked on the script. This was done on the location, we used for all interior and exterior scenes. This enabled the actors to get to know the house, and each other, before we started filming.

Continued on P. 218



Fred and Janet are embraced by Fred's (Tim Corbin) and help (Neil Campbell). Patsy Blair and Richard O'Brien. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.



Tim Corbin at a New York screening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* where the film has built a cult reputation.



Kerry Walker as Felicity Barranger in *The Night the Prowler*. Tim Corbin and Neil Campbell as Dora and John.



[illegible]

This second section is intended to enable the photographer to participate in the problem solving process by providing the user with a room within which to participate.

[illegible]

To anyone who remembers the historic Supreme Court opinion in *Roe v. Wade* during the McCarthy era, the mere fact that homosexuals now feel free enough to label themselves as such, let alone that such a life can receive a television transmission, is evidence of a society nothing less than sexual freedom. It is standing up to be counted in a political sense. It is not in the end, a political statement.

Beef a cultural solution

While *Word Is Out* is also valuable as an empirical demonstration of the standard of mass stereotypes the damage which emerges from its release of interviews — namely the self-recognition is only one comfort away from monogamous life — seems undeniably symbolic: a modern variation on the self-made narrative conception of the happy ending.

The quest for nonstop sexual stimulation also defines the life of the married character of **Nightmare**, an independent feature compiled with money from German television. Its protagonist is a schoolteacher, experienced as a "man" by the school, the need to keep to himself by day and to pursue possible partners only in the night time world of small clubs and bars. The film directed by Ron Fiedl captures all the desperation and loneliness of living as a sexual fugitive and works with a authority that points of London's homosexual nights that the term "gay" seems unusually misplaced.

The optimal balance between structured and free play experiences between children and adults is a topic that is often discussed in the classroom. A developmental challenge with the free building to which we have referred is that it is often perceived as undemanding and undisciplined. The young changes but a dramatically different challenge has to be met in order to make the transition to a more structured activity with his one-page-nice-art-works card lead to the structured activity. The challenge is to make the transition to a more structured activity with his one-page-nice-art-works card lead to the structured activity. The challenge is to make the transition to a more structured activity with his one-page-nice-art-works card lead to the structured activity.

Edinburgh did at least reveal one unyielded attempt for independent British cinema. **My Way Home**, the third and final part of his Daughter's account of his deceased daughter's childhood shows young Jennie the director's alter ego meeting her first falling close towards self-expression during his national service in Egypt. With the relentlessly bleak Scottish scenes (highlighted by

back-clad Tigris moving through dark ravine and prime semidesert giving way to the sun-baked slopes of the North-African desert. Douglas fire is literally and spiritually the record of a journey from darkness to light: a hymn to heroism and a formal exposition of the way in which the staples of nature—digged to their essential and released in unadorned contemplation—can still derive an intense, almost ecstatic, reach. Living proof that style and humanness, force and feeling, are not incompatible.

While industrial businessmen and a few banks of local suppliers dominated the independent films produced in Britain, those from the U.S. used their independence to encourage a more idiosyncratic range of forms and feelings. Particularly worthy of mention were *Family Portrait* (directed by Alfred Hitchcock) and *The Foreigner* (by Anne

[illegible][illegible]

The up-market end of the U.S. independent gas & oil sector is a total unaffiliated pair of events and double cross between Roger Q. Kornfeld (the wheel) and Bruce Stern as the defunctive. Despite its pretensions to expertise, the non-credibility by Victor Hill is an intricate cross sequence and the most wonderful thing about it is its assumption that action is more important than information.

Also there are **CITIZENS BAND**, Jonathan Demme's hilarious adventure (part ghost film, part post-9/11s Americana) set among the radio hicks of the American heartland, an ensemble adventure comedy built from the observation that sophisticated technology is commonly at the hands of very crude people.

Two other films in the Festival, one from Japan and the other from Hungary, made it past our initial interest, although aside as a commercial film for Todd Terrence's *The Razor* (questioned if last year's Park festival stability managers to denote the conventional grammar of the advice misadventure *Rocky* style) with enough subversive device to question the art in genre.

The 10 stars Japanese war-crimes Kikkawa Shiroshi to the ongoing pro-litigation being fought to help by an ethnically ex-acting who salvages some of his self-respect in the process. Did the back-slashed of the Tokyo war-crimes be depicted by highly-stylized death's-jumps, guarantees members of Japanese's Tōkyōgō (Tokyo company) who all became as if they were involved in old periods every failed course set. The plain of doing works, the wisdom, endlessly alternating identification and Occidental to caught up in the story of cold-warriors and the other the story in which a last thing others believe it is told.

A new cinema form, separate from American horror, is heard in *Graveyard Book*, a ghost story by Anthony Browne and the music by a student film by the indie *Kulapen*, Jason Bode. One of its characters, a young boy, witnesses a change of reincarnation and personally viewing the world through an assortment of telescopes and cameras. The film is a meditation on the film we watch during the night and includes use of the extensive *Blade* film images. *Graveyard Book* is the product of a young man's limited experience with film, a trapped love of historical books and a limited understanding of the nature and conventions of historical narrative, though at times, involving secondary characters, it is a very good film. The film is emerges as a complex demonstration of a 1970 filmmaker recreating the director of 1950 horror films to narrate a story set in the 1830s. ■



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Roberto Mangrita y Gaxiola. *Así, an exploration of the relationship between*

FILMING THE 1. Woolloomooloo

"Woolloomooloo" is a social and historical documentary detailing the redevelopment of one of the old maritime areas beside Sydney harbor. Directed by Pat Fiske, Denise White and Peter Gailley, it received a Special Award "for its deeply committed presentation of an important social document" at the 1978 Australian Film Awards.

The film begins with the publication, in 1969, of a Sydney City Council-approved scheme for redevelopment of the area. It then progresses chronologically through to late 1977 when the first part of the Housing Commission's building program, a renovation project, was completed.

In 1970, the New South Wales Department of Main Roads began resuming land in Woolloomooloo to make way for the Eastern Freeway. Then, in 1972, Gateway Developments announced plans to demolish 11 acres of the area for high rise development.

This was opposed by local residents who formed a Residents' Action Group and called on the NSW branch of the Builders Laborers' Federation and the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association for support. In November 1972, the BLF and the FEDFA placed Woolloomooloo under a green ban. This halted further

demolition or construction by withdrawing union labor.

The green bans were a landmark in Australian union history — one of the rare times a union stepped outside traditional demands for wages and conditions, and took an active role in more general community issues. For the first time, also, communities, including residents' groups from the middle and upper classes, sought the assistance of trade unions.

In the following interview, Barbara Alysen talks with two of the filmmakers, Pat Fiske and Denise White, about their film.

Pat Fiske is an American who came to Australia in the early 1970s. She worked as a speech therapist, secretary, trainee-teacher and builders laborer. In 1973 she made her first film, "Barsforth", which was followed by "Hearts and Spades", "Push On" and "Ladies Room".

Denise White was involved in some of the community action that occurred in Sydney during the early 1970s. In 1974 she worked on the Anti-Expressway Groups' Community Access Program for ABC Television (along with John Fisher, Alan Ross and Peter Murphy). Her films include the 28 min videotape "The Social Responsibility of Industrial Unions" and "Woolloomooloo".

"Woolloomooloo" is the result of your involvement in the green ban movement. Could you describe your backgrounds?

Denise: I became involved in neighbor action when I was living on Randwick and fighting the Randwick Council over proposed developments. At the time, many of my friends were squatting in

Victoria St. There was a lot of uncontrolled redevelopment going on in Sydney, there were so many conflicts, the city was like a meat with all its teeth knocked out.

Like many others I had taken part in the Vietnam War demonstrations, and marched around with the left wing. I followed the activities of the Builders Laborers'

Federation, the unions were like heroes to us.

The green bans gave weak people power, and for a long time I felt the unions were so wonderful that someone ought to make a film about them.

Pat: I was involved in anti-war activities in the U.S. and came to Australia in 1972. In Sydney I became involved in the Women's

Movement, took up still photography and joined in the campaign to save Victoria St. during the last months of the squating there.

The green bans were unique — something I had never heard of before. Unions in the U.S. are very weak and don't have much impact.

Continued on P. 278



A banner with a poster, on Victoria St. Woolloomooloo



A street protest during the green ban period, Woolloomooloo

GREEN BANS

2. Green City

"Green City" traces the history of the green bans, from Kelly's Bush to Victoria St, and the destruction of the New South Wales branch of the Builders' Laborers' Federation.

In June 1971, an area of bushland in Sydney's affluent Hunters Hill district was re-zoned for development. The residents of the area formed an action group to fight the zoning and sought the help of two trade unions — the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association and the NSW branch of the BLF — in imposing a black ban on development.

The NSW branch of the BLF was then under the leadership of Jack Mundey (Secretary) and Joe Owens, members of the Communist Party of Australia, and Bob Pringle (president). Both unions agreed to assist the residents. In doing so they affirmed the right of a trade union to involve itself in wider political issues than the fight for wages and conditions.

The struggle for Kelly's Bush led to the term "green ban" — a black ban imposed to conserve communities and the environment.

Have you any background of political involvement?

No, I am not affiliated with any political party, though I guess I could be described as "leftish".

How did you become involved in filming the green ban movement?

I had filmed a lot of demonstrations for television between 1972 and '74, and over those

months I saw an important social trend emerging. It seemed logical to try and capture this in a documentary.

What was your next step?

Doug Craig, who ran the film, and I were working at TCN, and we were going to work on it with a journalist. It did not work out that way, and it was a journalist, and myself who applied to the Australian Film Commission for a

During the next three years, green bans were imposed on several other areas of Sydney. The bans halted proposed high-rise and commercial building in the residential areas of Woollahroo and Victoria St, and also prevented the building of a sports complex across Moore Park, a green belt in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

In June 1974, the Master Builders' Association successfully applied to the courts to de-register the BLF over the activities of the NSW branch. In order to regain registration, the federal branch of the union began pressuring the NSW branch to absorb its functions. In June 1975, the action was successful. The NSW branch was absorbed by the federal body and many green bans ended.

In this interview, Barbara Alysén talks with the director of "Green City", Richard Cole.

Cole is a news cameraman with TCN 9 in Sydney. He has worked as a still photographer and as a trainee director in a commercial production house. "Green City", made with Doug Craig and finished in 1978, is Cole's first film.

len. We submitted a rough outline but the producers felt it was not adequate and asked us to put something on film. So we dragged out all the stock footage we thought was relevant and put it in the song My Fellow Traveller. It was pretty horrible, but the Creative Development Branch bought it and gave us \$6000. This was in August, 1975.

A proviso of the grant was that the money could not be used for research footage, only for stock,

processing and related costs. The film could not have been made in such a low budget without the generosity of Frank Hermann, at Cusack, and Doug Craig.

Doug had left TCN and was freelancing, using Cusack as a base, but he honored his commitment to the project and contributed very largely to the end result. Frank gave us use of his editing rooms, when available. Of course, that was often only at night, and on many occasions we



A green ban demonstration in Sydney. Joe Owens is holding the banner at left.



Jack Mundey being carried during a demonstration in Sydney.

"The most significant feature of the green ban era was that ordinary residents and a union with a social conscience linked up in a unique coming-together; also, that a trade union expressed concerns for issues beyond the hip-pocket nerve with its members examining the consequences of their labor."

"The filmmakers who made 'Woolloomooloo', having been closer to the participants, capture the intimacies of the struggle, but for someone not initiated into the events, 'Green City' provides a sound introduction,"

— Jack Munday

worked all down, aided by the odd figure of white, before slipping off to our respective peeing jobs.

Given you were recording an ongoing event, when did you expect to complete the film?

We had to give a definite completion date to the ABC, so we allowed two weeks for shooting and two for editing. We all knew it was going to take longer and I suppose we felt we would stop when we had a complete picture of the period.

Even if the green bans had continued today, I think we would still have ended it where we did.

Where did the demonstration footage come from?

By the time we got the money, most of the big demonstrations — Playfair St and Pig St — had already happened. We had an assurance from TCN that we could have their footage, but it was in black and white. This worried us since TCN had already gone to color and they must have had color footage. But after months of preserving their film material because that was what we were getting nowhere.

We knew no one at the ABC, so we did not even try there. In the end we decided to use what we had. That meant trying to squeeze the black and white into the color footage.

Pat Fluke and Denise White also approached you for several footage for their film, "Woolloomooloo". Did you mind?

Actually, they approached Doug Craig and he did not know until after the event. Had I known, I might have thought twice.

Is there any unseen footage?

Some of the material on Victoria St is used in both films, but I don't matter as they are quite dissimilar films.

What sort of material did you film independently of your job at TCN?

Mainly interviews, the pub scene with Mick Fowler, and the overlay and bridge shots in the various locations. Mostly all the color footage is original.

We shot 17 interviews altogether, though most did not survive.

What about the scientists you interviewed — did they make statements?

No, there was no attempt at censorship or vetoing the film by anyone involved, including the developers. That surprised me.

One of the developers you interviewed in the film looked ill at ease and creative. . .

That is a misrepresentation. After all the didn't have to do the interview, he only did it because, as far as he was concerned, it was a low-budget film that would never be shown anywhere. He asked to see me before agreeing to check me out. When he saw I was not wearing a piece belt and a flask jacket, I guess he was quite happy to talk about his side of the story.

The film is quite a depressing progression through very far-reaching events. . .

There are two schools of thought on this. It was told by some people that a good documentary should have a point of view and should be strongly biased to avoid the Fair Camera style of reporting. But I do not necessarily believe that people switch off if they think there is a strong bias.

I think the film does lean in one direction, but I wanted to make it as subtle as possible. I personally wanted to give everyone a point of view and show all sides of the story.

What was your own view of the green bans?

I think they were inevitable. There was gigantic financial pressure on the city in a time of economic boom and, with full employment, the unions were flexing their muscles. With the tremendous amount of building

going on there was bound to be opposition from affected residents and so on. These things had to clash sooner or later.

What about the personalities: do you think Munday, Owens and Pringle had their roles blown out of proportion?

These people appear very little in the film and I have often been asked why we did not show more of Jack Munday, since many people assume the main plot phenomenon with him. Maybe it would not have happened without people like Munday, but what appealed to me was the story of a conflict of interests — a conflict between people. Too many people see it as a personal conflict between Munday and the developers, rather than a social phenomenon.

Do you think it was right for a camera to involve itself in not making out directly concerned with its members' pay and conditions?

Yes, and I think time has vindicated that. If you look back at it now and realize that if it had not been for great activists, places like Kelly's Bank would not exist, I think that speaks for itself.

Jack Munday is not regarded as a radical now, he is almost a conservative.

I wonder what kind of leap was involved for the residents of Hunters Hill, surrounding Kelly's Bank, having to approach a communist-led union?

When it came to the crunch I do not think they even thought about it. They had tried all the legal channels, all the gentled and proper channels, and they were obviously being screwed. They only had one weapon and they used it. I am sure the conservative people [sustaining with militant] knights were never assumed to them.

Were you ever threatened personally while filming demonstrations?

The only incident occurred

while we were filming a truck-load of builders laborers occupying a site on Playfair St. They had been drinking a few tanks and one of the laborers fell off. The second man and I were threatened by a couple of guys who said we got to be careful that the guy falling off the truck is given the impression that they were all drunk. Temperance became a bit flared and people were hurt.

People have also criticised the film for being very anti-police, which was never intended. The footage that was available was of people being dragged around and thrown into police wagons, and so forth, and I used it.

But you were also responsible for shooting some of it as part of your job?

I did not shoot all the footage that was used, only a small proportion of it. When you are out in a news cameraman you film what happens and, let's face it, controversial news is part of show-business — unless a story has some visual impact it is not considered good news. So obviously you film the action stuff.

Does TCN put an onus on you not to risk equipment or, on the other hand, to take risks to get good footage?

Well, television news is not non-stop violence — these punch-ups might only happen once a year. The rest of the time it is boring news conferences and interviews.

When these situations arise you just play it by ear. Cameras do get broken, but they are repaired, and you just try and get the best footage you can. The "best" in these situations means the stuff with the most action or violence in it.

Often the stations compete against one another to get the most action, which is pretty silly and does not have much to do with the issues. But in a 60 or 90 second spot you don't have much time for information, you just try to entertain.

What do you intend doing with the film?

At the moment I have two print-out versions. One was shown at the Chicago Film Festival, and the other has been accepted for the Leipzig Festival.

I have always thought of the market for the film as being foreign rather than local, even though the type of union activity it depicts seems to be unique to Australia. For instance, there is a lot of reaction against nuclear power plants in Germany at present, but it does not seem to have been inhibited by unions — it is a community action. *

Continued from P. 275

How did you come to work as a builders laborer?

Pat: I came out as a speech therapist but couldn't get work. I ended working as a secretary, so June Rieff, with whom I was sharing a house and was working as a laborer, suggested I try that. I asked around and someone told me to show up at a union at 6.30 a.m. one day. I did, and was taken on.

You were a laborer, not a "nipper"?

Pat: Yes. When I first walked onto the site the foreman just asked me if it was a joint experience, and I started a lot.

I was a laborer for 10 months, on four different job sites. We worked off a few times because some bins stopped developing in different places. I then lost three jobs in two weeks over the collapse of the Maribyrnong. I ended going to work in the union office.

In 1973 and 1974 there had been a lot of green bans, but after that pressure was put on the unions. The federal branch moved in and took over the floodway site (the Institute of Technology building). We occupied the site and some people went up in the crane and stayed there as part of the protest.

During the second week of the occupation I went up to the crane for a few days. I took a camera with me and filmed what I could.

Dennis and I met at the Sydney BFL Film Workshop in 1973. In 1975 we got back together to make a film about the BFL and the green bans. We drafted a budget and an outline, and put it to the Australian Film Commission. They gave us \$2300.

How long did you think the film would take to complete?

Pat: One year.
Dennis: Oh less. We thought it would take a few months.

What was the commercial news coverage of the disputes like?

Dennis: It glamorized everything and did not discuss the issues well. Even when the miners reserved walk coverage — and there was a lot of footage on television — the resident activists were treated as being a bit silly, as though they were acting

irrationally.

Pat: We did not start collecting footage until late 1974. Commercially, a lot of what we worked with came from news items.

We lived everywhere to get different footage — all the legal sites. The ABC charged \$13 per foot, and although they had shot thousands of feet of demonstrations, etc., there was very little in their library. Only at one television station was there a historian who thought the footage important enough to put away. She let us look at it and then we went to the news director who said, "You can have it for \$100, just as long as we don't know anything about it."

Dennis: We explained that it was a non-commercial affair, which would not make much money and so on. He was very nervous about it.

Later, we got some other footage from Richard Cole and Doug Craig.

Was there much private footage around?

Dennis: Peter Murphy's had been shooting in Victoria St, had about 8000.

Pat: Also, some people at Film Australia wanted to make a film on Victoria St, and they arranged to make a training film. They wanted to work on a collective, but the heads at Film Australia wanted the project to have a producer and director, and somehow they never agreed.

The film was shelved and we approached the film library to use the footage they had already shot, but Film Australia was very reluctant. They were worried about the political angle, although by then much of the heat had gone out of the issues.

Finally, we gave them a written undertaking that we would not use any of the footage to place people in a bad light.

How many interviews did you do?

Dennis: Eighteen on film, plus ten on video.

Was it hard getting to talk to the politicians and developers?

Pat: Peter Murphy is perhaps better known as a still photographer.

Dennis: In one case I had to go through several preliminary interviews before I got to speak to a developer. I then spent a lunch hour talking to him. The rain was pouring, and very indignant about the news coverage of the squating, but he felt I was innocuous — I just asked dumb. He kept insisting the evictions were legal and that his plans for redevelopment had been misrepresented.

On the other hand, there was another developer who really wanted to talk.

All these people we interviewed seemed at ease on camera. Do you think having a woman helped?

Dennis: I think it helped a lot. I was aware that I came across as a non-threatening person.

Pat: One of the people we interviewed started by giving us a beer, then became more and more talkative. Finally he pulled out a small pistol and said, "I've been threatened a few times, I have to carry this around."

When did the film change from being about the Builders Laborers' Federation to being about Woolloomooloo?

Pat: We started editing at the beginning of 1977 and as we had a lot of footage on Woolloomooloo, we thought we would start there. Also, the original concept had become too complicated, we realized that we were trying to do too much in one film.

Dennis: Peter Gidley joined us at this stage. He had shot some footage of Victoria St for Film Australia, and came in to help us edit — neither of us had done much editing before. The decision to divide the material into two films was a direct result of our involvement in the issues. We wanted to explore the progression of events and needed to go into some detail to do that.

We also wanted a chronological film where people could follow the story, but where those involved told it. That meant using a little narration as possible. We felt it would be stronger that way.

When did you complete the film?

Pat: In 1978, after a year and a

half of intense work. We never had enough money and everything had to be done on the cheap. The ratio of money to energy was disastrous.

Towards the end of the editing, we asked different people to come and look at it. We would screen the first cut, which was two hours long, every weekend and then discuss it — what people liked, what they found boring. That helped us cut it down to 75 minutes.

Was the \$3300 all the funding you received?

Dennis: No, after we got it to double-blind we raised an additional \$2800. Most of that, we were given a grant of \$1500 to pay off our debts.

How much did the film cost to make?

Pat: About \$16,000. There were profits totaling \$11,000, and we sold the remaining \$3000.

We paid almost no one apart from the sound men, the sound editing and the neg cutting, it was produced by voluntary labor.

What was the shooting ratio?

Dennis: It is hard to tell because we used the material from two films. Perhaps 15 or 20 to 1. By the time we did the interviews we were very worried about money, so the interviews were highly structured with a very low ratio.

Are you now working on the second film?

Pat: At the moment we are both too weary to finish it, although I may work on it later.

We made Woolloomooloo primarily for Australians, and it has been received well here. But I know people overseas have heard about green bans and are interested. Since the Australian experience, there have been green bans in Britain and New Zealand.

I am taking Woolloomooloo to the U.S. to screen it on the university circuit and wherever else I can. I am curious to see whether people in the U.S. can understand the issues. It has been shown by the British Film Institute in London, and at the Chicago Film Festival. *



The Ruckus area of Sydney in the time of the amnesty. Into new money: Woolloomooloo

1. The New South Wales branch of the BFL sponsored road occupations for several years, as part of that policy some 30-40 weeks, about the same between 1972 and 1974. Major of that was worked in "loggers" doing such work at protests, collecting donations for the BFL and in some cases, first aid kits. They came 10-15 women mostly because because among that being food and for film.

FILM INSURANCE TRENDS

Robert Le Tet

The Author Insurance Working Group recently arranged a visit by British film insurance specialist, Mr. Keith Aydin, managing director at Quakley Langdon Entertainment Services Ltd. London. The purpose of the visit was to meet with some of the Australian film principals, get a working knowledge of the local industry and generally answer any queries prior to the Australian visit.

Mr. Aydin said that outside the major U.S. and British production companies there was little knowledge about the range and scope of film insurance available. He also said that to get the best rates for the most comprehensive film insurance should be negotiated with the production as early as practicable, by working from the shooting script, budget, schedule and budget for each scene. The producer or the insurance broker will be assisting the risks accurately. The producers need not allow for unknown contingencies.

Insurance premiums are already a significant budget item. About 3 per cent, excluding workers' compensation for a typical \$500,000 Australian production. But if the Australian Film Commission does not contribute to provide the completion guarantee for final 10 weeks in "Error and Omission" insurance because mandatory for overseas distribution, then producers can look towards local insurance companies, reaching as high as 12 per cent of a \$300,000 production. This percentage figure varies substantially, either an upward, depending on budget size, subject matter, location, special effects, cast, etc. However, it is reasonable to assume that the provision for insurance is going to increase significantly.

Insurance works cannot be avoided by producers adopting a "go it alone" attitude because insurers are looking more and more closely at the security of their investment. And the sudden increase in interest in insuring film evolutions of piracy and theft of films in the U.S. and Britain that have involved distributors and exhibitors will result in a marketing arena and contracts cover for overseas and even possibly local distribution.

The problem is how can it be done without making the filmmaker's edge even less with rising costs that do not add to profitable returns. Part of the solution lies with claim minimization by an even more professional approach by the producer, by careful selection of a professional film insurance broker and perhaps by

comprehensive insurance purchasing by an organization representing all or a group of Australian producers. This film insurance programme currently totaling about \$300,000 a year, comprises insurance, protecting, by either the AFC or one of the state corporations, could do a lot towards stemming the escalating costs in the area.

The main insurances available are:

1. PRE-PRODUCTION AND FILM PRODUCER'S

INSURANCE insurance which covers the loss incurred by the producer if certain named people, usually the director and several principal artists, are unable to work on the production as scheduled because of accident or illness.

It is the event of those insured is involved in an accident or suffers an illness which either delays principal photography or causes the film to be abandoned, the policy pays:

(a) the cost of filming being delayed and additional expenses incurred by the producer while waiting for the insured person to recover.

(b) in the event of the film being abandoned, all positive costs incurred to date are covered together with all ancillary additional costs.

The amount is charged as a levy on the estimated costs incurred up to completion of principal photography. The rate depends on the number of people to be insured and the length of time taken in complete filming. The producer is normally required to pay for the last part of any loss after:

(a) the first U.S. \$10,000 of costs covered or
(b) so long as the last insured or insured person is hospitalized for more than 40 hours.

It is necessary for all those to be insured under the policy to be medically examined by a doctor.

2. ALL RISKS INDEMNITY INSURANCE which pays the loss incurred by the producer if the negative is lost, stolen or damaged in any way.

The policy is divided into two sections:

(a) Negative only covers the new stock and exposed negative optical loss or damage. In the event of a total loss the policy pays for the replacement of the stock and for the cost of re-shooting any damage lost or damaged.

(b) Positive stock, fully exposed and processing, this pays the additional costs to the production should the production be delayed because:

(a) the new stock is faulty;

(b) the camera has a fault which leads to the negative being wrongly exposed or damaged.

(c) in any other obvious during processing.

The producer is sometimes required to carry the first U.S. \$50,000 of any loss falling under Section (a).

The policy excludes claims arising from mechanical or electrical breakdown of the camera unless the negative is actually damaged.

The premium is charged as a rate on the cost of the production to be completed on a noner point or GRI.

3. ALL RISKS INSURANCE which covers the actual value of the equipment, props sets and wardrobe being used on a production.

The producer is normally required to pay the first part of any loss, say U.S. \$50,000. The premium is calculated as a rate on the total value of the items to be insured.

4. EXTRA EXPENSE INSURANCE which covers the producer against additional costs incurred if the production is delayed because props, sets or equipment are damaged or destroyed.

The policy normally requires the producer to pay the first part of any loss, say about U.S. \$75,000.

The premium is charged as a rate on the cost of production and varies according to the type, size and complexity of the sets being built.

5. ERRORS AND OMISSIONS INSURANCE which covers the producer against costs and compensation that may become payable if the content of the production is found to be slanderous or libellous. The policy also covers invasion of copyright, invasion of privacy and theft of ideas.

Most major distribution companies now have a clause in their contracts which state that the production company must carry this insurance.

Policies are normally arranged for a period of two years for numerous sums of U.S. \$200,000 for any one claim and U.S. \$2,000,000 for all claims.

The policy, naturally, is subject to the producer's attorneys having necessary steps to ascertain that the subject is eligible for use as a feature film.

The producer normally has to bear the first U.S. \$20,000 of any claim under the policy, including legal expenses.

GUIDE FOR THE AUSTRALIAN FILM PRODUCER: PART 13

NON-THEATRICAL AND OTHER EXPLOITATION OF THE FILM

In this 13th part of an 18-part series, *Cinema Papers* contributing editor Antony J Ginnane, and Melbourne solicitors Ian Ballant and Leon Carr, discuss the rapidly-expanding avenues of non-theatrical exploitation of a finished film.

A. Introduction

The term "non-theatrical" has been strictly used by the film trade to refer to the distribution of 16 mm films in situations where no formal admission charge is made for patrons, i.e. the opposite of theatrical distribution where an admission fee is charged. The term has also been used in a looser sense to include television distribution in all its forms, so-called "over the counter" distribution, in-flight distribution, the distribution of video cassettes and video discs, etc.

In this article all these "non-theatrical" rights will be discussed, but the term "non-theatrical" will be used in its traditional sense.

B. Non-Theatrical Distribution

(i) Australia

Non-theatrical distribution in Australia encompasses some club screenings, film societies, cruise ships and other specialised hangars.

There are many small specialist libraries that import 16 mm prints of films that have not been brought into Australia as 35 mm. Libraries such as the Vincent Library, Skerrett Films, the Sydney Filmmakers Co-op and Quality Films. Some of these libraries also import 35 mm material. The Australian Council of Film Societies has published a comprehensive list of these non-theatrical firms.

There are also two major non-theatrical libraries which handle the 16 mm distribution of films already imported into Australia on 35 mm or 70 mm by the major American distributors, and the major Australian independent distributors. These are Australian Film Hire, which operates offices in most states and handles, *inter alia*, Roadshow, Filmways, Warner, C.I.C., G.U.O. and Disney product, and Fox-Columbia 16 mm, which handles UA, Fox and Columbia product. Fox-Columbia 16 mm operates out of the Fox-Columbia exchanges in each capital.

A 16 mm print order can range from one print for a specialised "art" film to 25 or 30 prints for a blockbuster. Non-theatrical gross revenue in Australia can go as high as \$40,000, but is generally between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for a reasonably popular tale.

There are a number of different non-theatrical deals possible, but Australian Film Hire, whose deals are typical, usually works on one of two arrangements.

(1) Australian Film Hire advances all costs of prints (but not the cost of making a 36

mm negative), recovers its costs and charges 35 per cent distribution fee, or

(2) the producer provides prints free of charge and Australian Film Hire distributes for 25 per cent.

Either deal may prove the more lucrative, depending on the potential of the film.

An Australian producer in negotiating his distribution deal, will often find that the distributor wants non-theatrical as well as theatrical distribution rights to be included in the licence. The producer should endeavor to have the non-theatrical reversion fed directly to him, otherwise the theatrical distributor will charge his distributors for, and the producer will, in effect, be paying double commission. Whether the producer is able to convince the theatrical distributor to meet the sub-distributor's fee out of his share of the proceeds will, of course, depend on his market place leverage.

(ii) Foreign

It would be extremely rare for a foreign theatrical distributor deal not to include non-theatrical rights, although one can always try to negotiate. The rights are of some tangible value in Britain and Canada, and potentially very valuable in the U.S. if the film is of the sort that can crack the lucrative campus circuits. If the theatrical and non-theatrical rights are granted the producer should also be wary of double distribution fees.

Britain, Canada and the U.S. have many specialist 16 mm distributors, and it may be that certain Australian films would be better

off going directly into non-theatrical distribution, rather than spending large sums on a major distribution launch.

C. Television

GB Australia

To anyone who has had much experience of the people of international film sales in theatrical and non-theatrical markets, a television deal is like a breath of fresh air. It is close reality with its deductions, and no need for cheques, audits and the like. Most television contracts are relatively easily negotiable and deals are made available quickly.

Australian television stations have been heavily involved in the resurgence of the local film industry by pre-purchasing films for television, as well as direct treatment — and, sometimes, a combination of both. It has been said, however, that a number of successful Australian films have not risen as much for television sales as they might if they had not been ground-lifted. This is undoubtedly true, but television purchase prices have been commonly increasing in Australia, and the pressure on the networks for local content has made it, in some ways, almost a seller's market.

On the whole it is comparatively easy for the producer, in doing his theatrical distribution deal, to retain television rights for himself, provided he gives a protection period (usually three to five years) in the theatrical distributor before the film airs on television. Generally, too, the Australian distributor does not even need television cross-colateralization for any advance he may pay for theatrical rights.

There is some doubt whether a major distributor could get a higher price for the producer's future by including it in a package of imported films, but, of course, the premium element would need to be in excess of the distribution fee to make it worthwhile.

There are dangers too if the producer's contract does not have controls over the price of their "feature" as the detriment of the independent producer. One method of controlling this is to stipulate a minimum price below which the distributor cannot sell.

Television contracts are generally for four screenings over five, seven or 10 days. Sometimes more screenings are included, but the producer must ensure that he does not then have to pay out standard fees to other operators.

Contractors can be for the capital city network station only, or for all Australia. If the producer only sells capital cities, he can then equal to the various country stations and non-aligned capital city stations. Of course, the price he gets will be less if he only sells capital.

The price range for Australian feature television sales is, at present, between \$30,000 and \$100,000. The success at the theatrical box-office, coupled with publicity for television, will affect sale price. Much higher fees, of course, have been obtained by expensive blockbusters.

Certain television networks are currently offering premium prices for the early sale of Australian features. This can mean an additional 25 per cent or more on the purchase price. Normally, the station will want the film to go on air 12 to 24 months after theatrical release, as opposed to three to five years. The producer must carefully weigh the advantages of this extra fee against the negative effects of

exhausted newsmen, theatrical and non-theatrical, if word gets out (as it always does) that the film has been sold (under its specific circumstances, it is probably only worthwhile if the film has either been a failure at the box-office, or has had very flat theatrical play-off).

Normally, it is the responsibility of the producer to supply, at his cost, a new 16 mm television-acceptable print of the film to the network at the time of the deal. The print must be substantially "patterned and screened" if the film is scope.

Some stations, however, are now prepared to accept a dub of a 35 mm master video tape.

III Foreign

Many Australian films have had limited foreign theatrical potential and have been sold direct to television. Frequently, as in the case of the BBC in London and Zeeva Films in Germany, theatrical and non-theatrical rights have also been acquired in a sort of covered protection. In Britain, a union-ensured live-on-air television screening of a feature may already release theatrically, but means that films of limited box-office potential have been better off going directly to television.

Where films are licensed theatrically abroad, it is generally possible to keep the television rights free, again giving an appropriate protection period. Thus, five or seven years later, the television rights can be licensed. Sometimes, of course, the distributor will at least stand, if his advance minimum guarantee is a large sum, that the proceeds or part of the proceeds of any television sale be made available to him as a protection in the event he does not recoup his advance, and sometimes his launch cost.

Again, a theatrical distributor may agree to handle first television sales for a percentage (not cross-colateralized). This may be a good idea as he probably knows his own market place best. Of course, appropriate "licensing" protection clauses or base prices will need to be in the contract.

The U.S. is a special case. American distributors generally want all rights, and want those rights to be cross-colateralized. They argue that high advances and launch costs make this sensible. However, for these days frequently by way of pre-sell the film will be sold to an American network either CBS, NBC or ABC. Millions of dollars can be involved and to date none of the new Australian films have attained a network sale.

The networks very rarely buy for their premium-based "prime time" anything other than U.S. "blockbuster," "made for television" or so-called "non-censorship" films (e.g. *Kali*, *Down*, *Wild Geese*, *Superman*). A "late night" network, which specializes in action, suspense and horror, frequently buys European dubbed material and independent American films for prices around U.S. \$250,000-\$400,000.

A "Saturday morning" network after screens G and PG rated material for prices around U.S. \$100,000. Network advance contracts frequently send a minimum of theatrical play-offs.

Network screenings usually take place two years down the line. If a network deal is done, and sometimes if not, Home Box Office, or its equivalent, will screen the film to its subscribers 12 months or so after first theatrical release.

1. Home Box Office is a subscription television service which is a separate deal and can be worth up to \$5 million a year for an average quality feature. It is often better for a subscription to a special video channel.

After network screenings, or immediately after theatrical release, if no network sale is forthcoming, the film can be placed in a syndication package. This means it is sold by an agent to various television stations — independent as well as network affiliates. (The network affiliates take it for inclusion in their own-network programming.)

There are three major syndicators based in New York: World Vision, Viacom and Time-Life (which owns Home Box Office), and many smaller outfits. The syndicator takes a fee (around 20 per cent) plus his syndication costs (brochures, product reel, etc.), and then makes. A fair average quality film could pick up another \$100,000 to \$200,000 as syndicator. Syndicators sell in packages, and again licensing protection is needed.

Public Broadcasting Service is a locally-run "public network" which allows Australian ABC type material and purchases, either city by city or on a whole country basis, specialist features. Many Australian features would seem suitable for PBS sale. A sale price may be as high as U.S. \$50,000 for the U.S. It is important to note that the producer should only sell as many television transmissions as he has in his Equity agreement unless he wants to pay extra residuals.

Producers should also note that the New York syndicators and others (e.g. Paramount Television) also sell features to television on a worldwide basis, sometimes paying advances of up to U.S. \$150,000 or more. Diversity this is a good way to go only if he has been established there in the theatrical market in the film anywhere.

D. Supplemental Markets

GB Australia

The area of "supplemental markets" (as Equity terms them) is still unexplored within Australia. There has been very limited home and foreign distribution, some "over the counter" sales of 16 mm and 8 mm prints, and short-run versions, and some small operators are involved in various video cassette systems.

So far, Australian Equity has not gained supplemental market performance rights in its feature film agreements and is presently discussing these areas with film industry representatives.

The whole area of video seems to be a growth market, and some Australian distributors are now paying video production charges in their contracts.

GB Foreign

Video cassette sales are in full swing in the U.S. and major film distributors are licensing selections from their libraries to video wholesalers. Video discs too are beginning to enter the market. Almost all U.S. distributors and many foreign distributors need video rights in their distribution contracts. Again, Australian Equity has not licensed these rights, but has set out basic findings for the exploitation.

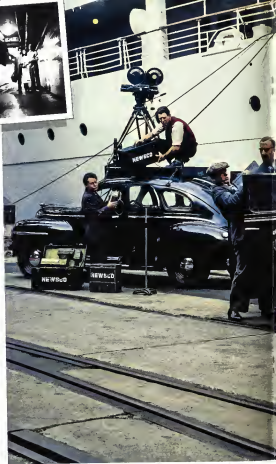
It is hoped an industry-wide agreement will soon be reached on these matters. It does appear, however, that some Australian producers have already licensed video rights in certain markets, despite Equity's position.

It is not yet clear the size and potential of these markets for Australian producers, but it is hoped to be able to provide such information as the Subscription Service is at times to hand. *

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D. J. [Signature]
Timothy Morton



NEWSFRONT

A Little Technical Information from Kodak

EASTMAN Color Negative II Film 6847 (25 mm) and 7247 (16 mm) is a camera film intended for general motion picture production. The wide exposure latitude of this high speed film makes it especially suitable for both indoor and outdoor photography under a wide variety of conditions.

GENERAL PROPERTIES: Color Negative II Film is balanced for use in tungsten light, and in daylight with appropriate filters. The emulsion contains a colored-coupler mask to achieve good color reproduction in release prints. The film is characterized by a high degree of sharpness, fine grain and excellent color rendition.

LIGHTING-CONTRAST: The ratio of key light-plus fill light to fill light should be 3:1 or 3:1 and should seldom exceed 4:1, except when a special effect is desired.

COLOR BALANCE: This film is balanced for exposure under tungsten illumination at 2800 K. It can also be used with tungsten lamps slightly higher or lower color temperature (± 100 K) without correction filters, since final color balancing can be done in printing.

When other light sources are used, correction filters are required - often for both camera and light.

EASTMAN PLUS-X Negative Film 6881 (25 mm) speed and grain characteristics make it well suited for general motion picture production - both outdoors and in the studio. These film characteristics provide an excellent balance between the maximum desirable speed for general production work and the finest grain available we offer at this speed.

GENERAL PROPERTIES: The medium speed of this panchromatic film permits the use of small apertures (thus allowing good depth of field), and the film is widely used for making composite projection background scenes.

EXPOSURE INDEXES: When used for development to a gamma of 0.65 to 0.70, use at Daylight-80 and Tungsten-64.

For further information on Kodak Motion Picture Film contact your nearest Kodak branch office.

Melbourne 182 Collins Street
Phone: 654-4533
Sydney 62 Dorch Street, Arcadia
Phone: 680-0665
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My Brilliant Career

PRODUCTION REPORT

"My Brilliant Career" is adapted from the novel by Miles Franklin. It tells the story of Sybylla Melvyn (Judy Davis), a sensitive and passionate teenager who cannot bear the dull life on her parents' farm.

Sybylla leaves for her grandmother's home where she begins to yearn for an artistic life. There she meets, and is drawn to, the landowner Harry Beecham (Sam Neill). The film ends with Sybylla being faced with a decision between her less-than-perfect love for Harry, and her desire to pursue an independent life.

Produced by Margaret Fink and directed by Gillian Armstrong, the \$800,000 film was shot in eight weeks from October to early December, 1978. It will be released in mid-1979.



MARGARET FINK

PRODUCER

I had been thinking of making films since I was 18, and when I read Miles Franklin's book, it just clicked. Obviously, Miles is a non-typical feminist, and I think I have always been one, that's probably why I responded to the book.

Anyway, I bought the rights, and after getting a couple of investors done I made my first submission to the Australian Film Development Corporation. But the AFDC knocked the project back, saying they felt it would be a great film, but that it needed a good writer. So I hired a good writer (Eleanor Woomble), but they knocked it back again.

In all they rejected it three times. But then they knocked back *Picnic at Hanging Rock* three times.

Why did the AFDC reject the project three times?

It probably had something to do with *The Removalists*. There was

Margaret Fink, after writing and directing three short films, entered the world of feature filmmaking when she produced "*The Removalists*" in 1974.

"My Brilliant Career" is Fink's second feature, and easily the most ambitious. In the following interview, conducted by Peter Bellby and Scott Murray, Fink describes the development, financing and marketing of the film. She begins by discussing how she became involved with filming the novel by Miles Franklin.

some disappointment at the time over whether their money was insured or loaned for the film.

What was your next step?

One of the biggest mistakes I made on *The Removalists* was not to have a distributor involved from the beginning, so I went and saw David Williams at Greater Union. I gave him the book and he said he would ring me back in a week. Well, I had seen enough bumps in my life to realize he probably never would, but he did. He thought the book was

excellent and was more than interested in investing in it. He then gave me a letter of commitment.

I suspect GUO has come in with that first investment, because a lot of people pressed money and did not come across. There were not just vague promises, but certain promises. It is very depressing to have people change their mind on you, but I don't let it worry me. I am going to attack the problem positively by going back to them.

My next step was to make the book to its purpose at Women's

Weekly. It was important for me to get her opinion, as she is a benchmark for her readers' tastes. Two weeks later she rang and said she loved it. I realized then that her readers were ready for the book.

Who did you approach for investment after GUO?

The most important thing was to get some money for Eleanor. A lot of initial work, like the location surveys, had been done on my own, but when it came to Eleanor, I had to raise some money. So I approached the Victorian Film Commission and a provided the \$1M investment on the strength of her treatment.

If the VFC had come in as a principal investor, would you have had to shoot the film in Victoria?

I would have done anything necessary to get the film off the ground, including shooting in



Victims That we finally got the money from the New South Wales Film Corporation was marvelous, because I had always wanted to shoot in the Murrumbidgee district, which is the region Miles Franklin wrote about.

What proportion of the budget was invested by the NSWFC?

They put up half the budget, the rest consisted of the GUG (investors) and money from other private sources.

What are your views on the state of private finance?

I think it is getting healthier, and I intend working and spreading my way into it.

You have to follow up all your initial approaches and leads continuously. But there are surprises: the last \$50,000, for example, came far more easily than I had expected.

In the early days of financing in Australia there were a lot of individual speculative investors who were prepared to take a punt. A lot of these investors seem to have dropped out...

They are replaceable.

Do you think the new Assessment Tax Act will help?

It has to. Film is still a risk area, but there is the mystique about being associated with the most glamorous business in the world that will always get people in.

There were also several people I didn't approach in the right way. I assumed they knew more than they did. Next time, I will have to do my job a little better.

Did the box-office failure of "The Kennedys" create difficulties for you when raising private finance?

No, none at all.

So you don't think it is a matter of track record, but of investors viewing each project separately...

Exactly. In any case, *The Kennedys* isn't a disgrace. It ran for seven weeks at the Century in Sydney, and it is still playing repertory cinema in New South Wales.

I am not satisfied of it as a first film, for all its faults. Apart from not having too distributor link, my main problem was not having a publicist. Consequently, I didn't sell it properly. Canine, for example, was a nightmare I had to share on my own, and when my American friend ran \$50,000, I knocked him back; I just didn't know.

How do you react to the argument



Hylda with her Uncle Julius after dinner at Collingwood.

that there are, at present, reasonable grounds for being bullish about making period films in Australia?

I think it is absolutely irrelevant. The question is not whether a film is a period film or not, but whether it is a good film. I believe ours is its theme is contemporary and of importance to young women today.

I wanted to make the film because of these ideas, not because of the setting or the era in which Miles Franklin wrote about them.

As for the public, I think the only consideration is whether a film is satisfying and enjoyable.

Selecting Gillian Armstrong as director was a bold decision. Why did you choose her?

I was extremely impressed with *A Hundred A Day*. I also think Gill had a lot to do as a film, but *A Hundred A Day* has the punch I wanted.

Did you particularly want a woman director?

No. I chose Gill because I believed she was the best person available for the film. I had faith in her creativity, and that faith has been vindicated.

Was Armstrong an acceptable



Hylda in a shot from the opening sequence of *My Brilliant Career*.

choice to all the investors?

Yes, though most didn't even ask who the director was, which was really weird. Some people are by now impressed by how you sell them an idea than by any individual credits. Many investors are too busy in their own fields to know much about filmmaking.

You have been described as a creative producer. Do you accept that description?

Well, it is an exact one, because I don't believe in merely handing over a film to a director. Gill chose Nick Buzza, and I think it is the director's prerogative to

choose the editor. I decided on Eleanore Wrenschmidt, Luciana Arrighi (production designer) and Nathan Waks (musical director).

I also insisted on having a say on the casting and script development.

Did you make comments during production on the basis of rushes?

No, it is a bit late than I believe in massive involvement in the pre-production field, because if you don't have it right by the time you shoot, you are fucked.

I was on location a lot, but all I would ever say to Gill was, "Now we are really getting into it," or

Sybil and Harry in a scene in *The Dressmaker*.

something like that. She didn't need to be told.

Was there any need to press for alterations in the final script?

Blosser did an excellent job of converting the novel into a screenplay, but Gill, Jane Scott and I sensed there were still things that needed to be done with Blosser's script. So, we brought in Ted Ogden as a script editor.

What changes did Ted Ogden make?

Ted tightened it a lot and strengthened the structure. But probably the most important change he made was to put an extra emphasis on the character of Harry (Sam Neill). In the novel, Harry is not so cut out. Ted helped make him a more believable, actual person.

Do you think a script editor should be used on all Australian features?

I don't know; I haven't had enough experience. Probably it is a good policy.

You used two unknown actors in the lead roles. Do you think this will create problems in selling the film overseas?

There are no real stars here; most people would not have heard of Wendy Hughes or John Waters.



Wendy Hughes as Aunt Helen, who tries to seduce Harry after being abandoned by her husband.

As for overseas, an Australian movie is difficult.

From a production point of view, the film is logistically quite complicated. Did you face major problems, like bad weather or going over schedule?

No, and those things that seemed to be disadvantages turned out to be advantages. For example, the NSWFC videotape we do a 35 mm test after we had chosen an actress as Sybil. When we saw the test, we realized she was wrong.

We could have gone along with her, and it still would have been a good film, but it would have been like *The Godfather*—no personality. I have to thank Mike Taormina for that.

Another problem was when Russell Boyd said he was quitting. I nearly fainted, because for years I had been talking to him about shooting the film. But, as it turned out, Don McAlpine did a brilliant job.

There was also the act, which I felt looked a bit artificial in the rushes. But heavy rain came down and weathered it overnight.

Could you describe the way in which the film was organized? Was each department given financial independence or did you personally re-arrange everything?

Everything was co-ordinated through the production office. Jane Scott (associate producer/production manager) ran the production office with Trezona Greth, who is an excellent film technician, with the support of Helen Everingham (production secretary). They were all first class.

But did you approve each expenditure and check balance sheets?

I looked at things with Trezona, but the production office was so efficient. I can tell there is. Everything was checked by Penny Woods of the NSWFC, anyway, and she is very good in that area.

What is happening with marketing of the film?

I have appointed David Weiss and Kevin Rhodes of the Brooks White Organization as publishers. We are presently dealing with the NSWFC and GUD.

What have you planned for the campaign?

I am leaving most of that to David and Kevin. One thing I believe, however, is that you can override promotion. No one could have had more promotion than I had on *The Kennelwallers*, and a lot of it I didn't want.

Continued on P. 379

GILLIAN ARMSTRONG

DIRECTOR

When did you first become involved on "My Brilliant Career"?

I met Margaret Fink four or five years ago during the filming of *The Remains of the Day*. I was the costume designer on the film, and during the shooting Margaret and I became good friends.

Margaret had wanted to film the book since 1965, but the first I knew of the story was when she gave me the book to read. At that time, I was ready to work on it in any capacity; I never thought I would be asked to direct it.

Margaret first spoke to me about directing the film just before I finished *The Singer and the Dancer* in 1976. Each of us felt *My Brilliant Career* was a film that a woman should direct, especially since Miles Franklin was such a strong feminist. Miles believed in women doing things on their own, and I always felt she would prefer a woman to make her story.

Gillian Armstrong first attracted critical attention with her remarkable short film, "A Hundred A Day". This was followed by "Sadie Nine", "Gretel" and "The Singer and the Dancer", which won the 1976 Greater Union Award for best short fiction.

Armstrong also worked on several features as an art director, before returning to directing with "Smokes and Lilies", a documentary on three 14-year-old girls.

"My Brilliant Career" is Armstrong's first feature, and she talks of that experience with Peter Beilby and Scott Murray.

At first I felt the film was too big for me and that I would be better off if I did a few low-budget feature films. But as time passed I became very involved with the screenplay and was determined to follow it through to a finished product.

Did you have any reservations about doing a period film?

No, but if you ask what my most firm I will tell you it is not going to be a period film. There are a

million reasons for that: horses being turned around, having to wait for hours on end as a coach is put into the right position, and so on. It drove me crazy.

How did the script develop?

Margaret approached a few writers before finally choosing Eleanor Wexman. She then applied to the Victorian Film Commission for money to develop the screenplay. I was in two minds at first about

writing Eleanor because of her involvement on *The Sighting of Wrecked*. Many people had said they felt the film would be too sensitive and I felt my connection between the two would work against me. However, once I met Eleanor I felt it would work — she had so many good ideas.

Eleanor then worked on the script for 18 months, though there were several breaks during that period.

Did you collaborate closely on the script?

Yes. We threaded out a lot of ideas and then Eleanor did a rough treatment on the shape she thought it should take. After more discussion, I left Eleanor to do the first draft by herself.

Once we had that first draft, we started working together. We ended up doing eight or more new drafts though that was partly to keep up with the number of objections Margaret was sub-



rotting to film boards for money. We were not satisfied with all of them, but we had no choice.

What was the biggest problem you found adapting the novel?

The length. We realized immediately we couldn't condense the entire book, so one of the first decisions we made was to cut out the whole canoe, at the beginning, on her terrible childhood. The film now starts when Sybil is 13.

Blender was very good at pointing those aspects of the novel which could weaken the film's dramatic structure. For example, there is a long central part in the book where nothing really happens, other than Sybil's having a good time. At Coddie's, everything is so wonderful that she forgets all her ambivalence. Half the book she describes her fantasizing through the lovely countryside, picking strawberries, and lying peacefully in a hammock. We realized that that would be pretty dull on the screen and decided to condense it.

Another problem was the ending. I felt it didn't really go anywhere, and I had always wanted a strong ending. As one of the things I most liked about the book was knowing that Miles actually wrote it, we decided to try and make that clear in the film.

At the beginning of the novel Sybil is young and idealistic, and wants to do everything. Part of her writing process was to remove this idealism, so that by the end of the film she has characterized all her energies into achieving one aim — publishing her book. That gave me the more positive ending I wanted.

Were you tempted to adapt the story to contemporary times?

Yes. After all, the early knockbacks I looked at if the film would never go. Everyone was against period films, and we seriously thought about updating it. But I had always felt that was a strength of the book. It was written in the 1930s by a girl who lived in the boat, and who couldn't have known much about what was going on in the world — after all, suffragette literature hardly made it to Queensland. Miles was an exceptional woman who was ahead of her time, and that attracted me.

Another reason for staying with the period was that many of the restrictions at the time — the Victorian morals, the pressure of being married, etc. — just don't exist today. Women had no careers then, and that is what Sybil was fighting against.

I also felt that it would be terrible to update the book because Miles loved that period and its lifestyle. In fact, she wrote about it for the rest of her life.

At the same time, I was worried people would think that we had merely put modern ideas into a girl dressed in period clothes. I have done my best to avoid that.

Has the story been adapted in such a way that Sybil's struggle for independence addresses the struggle of contemporary women?

Yes, but I don't feel her struggle necessarily only applies to

women. Both men and women should relate to the story — that's why it doesn't matter being a period film. What the film is saying is contemporary.

Have you made the film political in any respect?

Yes, it is political in that we believe it has something to say. But I was very conscious of trying not to be didactic, even though the book is. At times Sybil is a

little bore, and she is always going around spewing out stuff about marriage and men.

Do you think women will want to see the film for its contemporary relevance?

Yes, I think they will, though I also hope they want to see it because it is a moving drama. There is a strong story, and, I hope, passion and romance. Most women who read the book can't put it down because they want to know whether Sybil ends up with Harry. I have been aware of that from the beginning.

It is interesting that you should choose two unknowns for the roles of Sybil and Harry...

Everyone wanted us to use same people, but the only male actor who was at all suitable for the role of Harry didn't want to do it. And there wasn't one same actress of the right age for Sybil.

In Australia, there are only a few leading men who are capable of being a sex symbol on screen.

We were getting desperate with the Harry situation because we had tried almost everyone, and there was nobody who was good enough and who looked physically right. I even started to think that I would have to change Harry's character and use another type of actor. So it was a great relief when



Harry (Blair Neill) and Sybil (Lynn Collins) boating on a dam on Harry's property, Five Bob Green



Harry and Sybil — the romance

I saw Sam Nork in *Sleeping Dogs*. I met him when he came to Melbourne to publicize the film, and wheeled him up to Sydney to do some tarts. He was terrific.

We also had trouble finding Sylvia. I didn't go out to schools like they did on *The Getting of Wisdom*, because I felt it was too demanding a role for an inexperienced actress. We were very lucky we finally located Judy. I think her performance has been very good.

Producers are extending an increasing influence on the final script. Were those clauses, for example, when Fink felt things had to be changed for commercial reasons?

No, Margaret never pushed for purely commercial reasons. This isn't to say we never thought of the commercial aspect, an artistically we both want the film to be a commercial success. But our general philosophy and approach was worked out and agreed upon during the early stages. That was, we wanted the film to be, above all, never boring, and always moving. Margaret then left Eleanor and I very much alone, and trusted our judgment.

There seem to be more women working on this film than most Australian features. Is that deliberate?

In all cases we have chosen the people we most wanted to work with, nobody was chosen because of his or her sex. We chose Eleanor because we liked her work on *The Getting of Wisdom*, Jane Scott (production manager) because of what she had done before, and so on.

Actually, I think *The Night the Fire* had more women on their crew than we did.

Do you think the opportunities for women in the Australian film industry have improved in the last few years?

They have improved. There are now women working in most areas, but careers and sound are still very difficult to break into.

The major problem is getting that first break. Fortunately, the Australian Film and Television School has done a lot to help women move into the industry.

Were you conscious of any tendencies on the set caused by you being a woman?

On a day-to-day basis the crew was fantastic. Perhaps a few people found it a bit hard to cope, but that is pretty good for any group of people. Even down there may have been respectful about being hassled around by a young girl, but there was no problem with the others. And people like



Celia Armstrong with Hector Court, a sports reporter discovered by musical director Nathan Wicks, during the filming of the woodland dance.

Don MacAlpine just showed for me.

Actually, any reason that might have existed has been told the set. You have probably heard the sort of gossip that has been going around — e.g. that it is a lesbian flag, or that someone was not chosen as director/loader because I felt he was a closet case. No doubt people are now saying it is up to the editor to put all my mess together.

Did you choose Don MacAlpine as director of photography because of his work on *The Getting of Wisdom*?

Yes, I thought that Don had done a beautiful job lighting *The Getting of Wisdom*, and it was certainly a director that had paid off. We are delighted with his work.

Apparently you had some problem with Actors Equity over hiring in a British actor?

One of the characters in the script is a young British gentleman, and we cast a British actor because we couldn't find anyone here who would be sufficiently convincing in the role. Then, at the last minute, Equity said they wouldn't give the actor a work permit.

Who did you finally cast in the role?

We contacted NIDA and said we were absolutely desperate and could we see their first-year boys. We did, and there was this guy who was just wonderful. His name is Robert Grubb, and he has

added a whole extra level to the film.

Fink has described himself as a negative producer. What does that mean to you?

Margaret has been involved in the project at a creative level from the beginning; it is, after all, her project. This does not mean, however, that I don't have full and final control.

We do have similar tastes to many ideas, so we could work closely together. It has all worked out very well, and the feedback I have received from her has helped me greatly.

How did you find working on *30mm* for the first time?

No problem, except I am now apart and advised by the 35mm screen and will find it hard going back to 35mm again.

My greatest problem was working with lined lenses for the first time. I am extremely particular about focusing, and on 16 mm you can just zoom in and out to get the focusing you want. With lined lenses, however, you have to be much more specific. So, in the beginning, there were a lot of lens changes, and cutting of tripod backwards and forwards to get the shot I wanted. But I soon learnt.

Are you going to use these lenses throughout the film?

There are a few pieces of music that will become the main theme. They have particular narrative relevance in the film.

Nathan Wicks will be arranging

the music, and we have already discussed the instruments I want. It will probably use a string quartet, or just a cello, violin or piano. There is not going to be a big orchestra.

THE SINGER AND THE DANCER

How did *"The Singer and the Dancer"* end up commercially?

I think Columbia made a mistake with the *Mathematics* release when they pushed it as a women's film. The first week was full of old ladies and housewives who were a bit shocked and confused by it. (I learnt this from my spies who sat in the audience.) Even though the reviews were encouraging, they came out a week late because the preview screening had been snuffed up. So all the people who wanted to see the film after reading the reviews only started coming in the second week. There was a real change-over in the audience.

The Singer and the Dancer is not really a commercial film, though I had hoped women would like it. But generally they found it hard to cope with. People said the bio-office and said they didn't like it as it upset them. It is one thing to go along to a theatre and have a little cry, but this film was too confronting for most. They didn't find this entertaining and they didn't want to know about it. I learnt my disappointment that you go to a mid-day matinee to escape.

Continued on P. 319

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Film Reviews



Felicity Bannister (Kelly Walker) and her "Archie" (Chris Connelly) in Jon Bernstein's *The Night the Prowler*

THE NIGHT THE PROWLER

Brian McFarlane

Jon Bernstein's film of *The Night the Prowler* opens on a quietly offbeat Sydney suburban house, with children's voices and laughter in the background. But the author of the screenplay is Patrick White, so we are prepared for those suggestive overtones to give way to darker sublimity.

There has been no more audacious director than White at the cinema, and valuably the usually sad claustrophobic isolation of Australia's suburban life. The style of the film is sometimes funny (through Peter Hopwood's as father on the same territory), and always redemptive.

From *The Tree of Man* through *After the Sunset* to *The Eye of the Storm*, we have seen movies and upon inside data suburban held up to the discerning mirror

of White's penetration, and still, still, still—no less of this particular kind of thing. And of course, he has been used up as a prophet by large numbers of those interested in the very life he created.

To now the movie seems to be regrettably predictable and the philosophy about the last creation could be taught up in the curriculum of social studies. Life increasingly grows. White and his movie actually speaking the universal dialogue, it's impossible that world-producers' director a major philosophical moral answers are asked. So too are questions of White's central metaphysics. His own color scheme, however often seen, no more than a dark to the end of us all.

In *The Night the Prowler*, the protagonist is Felicity Bannister (Kelly Walker), the teenage daughter of wealthy parents, who has been raped by a neighbor during the night. Or has she been? She refuses to answer his parents' questions

directly, describes her accident with almost willed ambiguity as "what you'd call walking—a very minor run. Some people might think it's like hands," and refuses to let the family doctor examine her.

As the police push their way in, the neighbors observe with interest. Mrs. Bannister (Gail Cuthbert) wails about what she has been through and "I would have I think to deserve such a serious thought," and she pulls out about checking Mr. Bannister's (Chris Connelly) best friend as asked the police is also said to have done.

So far so good. As the center of this is the girl's ambiguous behavior, a mixture of innocence and barely credible revelation, and Kelly Walker's acting has an alien quality that is amazing. Further, the family situation often provides drama, the mother's (Gail Cuthbert) for her daughter, is secondary to that for herself. "You don't know what I've been through," she tells

her old friend Midge (on the phone) and the father, having tried to buy police officers on the street, waits to examine her room and having the love.

Too quickly though the movie comes up to the opening scene we moved, then suddenly, through the heavy hand of the script, to the determination to fly the screen. When over process the mother's neuroticism, her goodness ("Cover yourself up dear") to Felicity's self-reliance, the mother's (Gail Cuthbert) best friend as asked the police is also said to have done. The mother was such a charming, like fellow—James Macgregor, and her victim's (Gail Cuthbert) of Felicity's experience. The father is concerned, with only slightly less surely as cheer, constant, dedicated in understanding.

There is not to suggest that previous may not be all these things, but rather that White's vision is never less or complicated enough to see that there

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FILM STUDY RESOURCES GUIDE

Resill Gilbert

They are, according to a microfiche index at the Australian Film and Television School, 94 titles confiscated in Australia which ran courses involving the study of film or video. As this list does not include secondary schools, Councils of Adult Education and Film Institutes, there is clearly a need for easily accessible and inexpensive film study material — in film and videotape. How this need is being met by governments, companies and co-operative film libraries is the subject of this two and a half

NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY

The holdings in the present collection show that the compilers of the tape lists were either quite systematic about obtaining the most prime film such American distributors as Columbia, MGM, Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox, United Artists and Universal, which have commercial in one corner.

computer booking service. iMature's will be introduced. A computer program is being designed to allow someone to use a wide range of genre classifications, and an efficient cross-reference system will enable the researcher to have quick access to full credits for the films listed. They will, for example, be able to observe members of all the films listed which have been scored by an individual national composer.

NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE



Among the 14,000 odd titles held at the National Library's Film Archive is the most comprehensive collection of Australian productions in existence: 200 feature films, 3000 copies of *CinemaScope*, Australian Maritime Navy and other newsreels, hundreds of amateur, event, television, news, and commercial clips.

Most of this rare material is not loaned but may be viewed at the library. There is also a focused catalog service available to film and television producers under special circumstances.

VINCENT LIBRARY



The Vincent Library is the film studies division of the American Film Institute. Under the National Film Library, the holdings of the Vincent Library are not available to teachers free of charge, but are available for a fee, varying from \$2 for a video tape to \$100 for a film. *ALBC 1990: 21* mail, to: S&S for Author and Connie Camille's experimental feature *Dirty Washes* (1989, 81 mins).

The *Yonkers Library* catalogues, edited by Sue Murray, are accompanied notes by Rod Bishop, Laura Chazy, Kim Moss, and John O'Hara, and includes abstracted and volume indexes. The catalog are lists 73 features, mostly modern literature and includes such manuscripts as Walter Hemm's *Agony*, *The Work of God*, *Wendy Jagan's Journals*, *The Conventions of Studied Woman*, *Middle*

James's *The Confessions* and Robert
Seymour's *Franklin's The Better Taste of
Being, and Being*.

There are 24 Australian films in the section, most having been made with the assistance of the Experimental Film and Television Fund, ranging from Nigel Bates's *Shogun Railway to Great Japan*, Yehudi Yuh's *The Children of an "Uncle Anyang"* and the 201 shorts are predominantly Australian experimental films made with federal assistance in the early to mid 1970s.

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The first filmmaker to arrive in Sydney to begin his job of film was in a room in the home of filmmaker Phil Noyes, at the Sydney suburb of Wahroonga, nearly 40 years ago. Noyes was the first manager of the Sydney Film-makers Co-operative, which that year had achieved recognition as a legal entity.

Today, the *Gleaner's* Creative Catalogue of Independent Film has served 100 titles of films made by low budget American filmmakers. The subject index gives an indication of the pre-occupation of independent filmmakers since the late '60s: Adolescent America, Anti-politics, Art, Children's Film, Comedies, Horror, Drama, Film Education, Environment, Experimental, Foreign, History, Women, Junior Life and so on.

The catalogue also charts the important contribution women filmmakers are now making in Australian film production, helped along by the Women's Film Fund of the Office of Women's Affairs and the Australian Film Commission.

Another important telling is of films made independently in the 40s, prior to government funding, such as Clare Lovell's *Fugitive Landladies* in 6 scenes shot with the 19th. Mass Prize in Milan in 1942 and the famous early works of filmmakers such as Ross War and Tom Cowan. *

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The **National Library Film Lending Collection**, Congress, is one of the world's largest film collections. Over 100,000 titles are in the collection which cater for the educational needs of primary and secondary schools. The national collection is systematized with two distinct divisions: there is the general collection which is arranged in 120 subject areas and includes many of the Open University films and some in the series of computer mathematics, science and music.

The second division is the film study collection. The 16-mm films and video cassettes in it are chosen for their suitability to study areas such as the history of science, film industry and the history of music.

The library's collection began with 100 volumes from the early 1970s, when the Film and Television Board of the Australian Council for the Arts presented a grant of \$25,000 to underwrite the costs for the establishment of a collection of film study materials in the university of film study materials in the National Library. The resources included participants from government bodies to a AFTRP Film Awards, AFTRP the Australian Film Institute, the Sydney and Melbourne Film Festivals, Cinematheque, and commercial film distributors. A working committee was set up to write recommendations for the content of the

Three comprehensive lists of synanthropes were produced. The first, a 33-page document compiled by David Madson and others covered Native Birds, with an emphasis on American Boreal Cuckoo 1908-1963 and its records on Alaska, the second

However, the lots were of great value in signifying improvement of pre-1980 disease, important British and American documentation, and operational investigations files.

A portrait of the study itself was appeared in 1975 to encourage the other universities, and the library was then able to provide advice to media teachers on the planning of their courses. In 1977 a *File Study Conference* was staged, with the film utilized by numerous country schools and was discussed in *Chorus Papers*, No. 16, p. 2731.

The catalogue, and its recent supplement, show that the fine study collection has a breadth and depth far exceeding the requirements of the average user. The holdings of select classical (Roman, Greek, French and American) have been extended and last year the library acquired 14 Warner Brothers features previously reported at this volume's News Photo. No. 17 p. 70.

There were supplemented late in 1978 with the acquisition of 12 6000 four-acre tracts in the New River portion of the NWR. Included are the Burgess Tract near Va. Lawton donated Old People's Village With a Zenith, and The Legend Way Nichols says On Dangerous Ground and They Liked Night, Ohio's Pleasant Angel Fair, and Robert Wood's The Sea Up. Other items include the Fred Astaire Musical Swing Time George Stevens' 1934, Kitty Pepp with Gump's Super Queen Wood, 1940, and an early John Ford Western, Wayne Moyer (1929).

This year the National Film Collection will be catalogued by computer. (Australian MAFB Broadcast) and a

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QANTAS





Bryce's Mackay-Peyne, who plays Dawn, relaxes on the beach in Tormentville (Torrance, Calif.).

DAWN!

Dawn! is a dramatization of the personal story of Australia's greatest woman swimmer, Dawn Fraser.

Director	Ken Kesey	Dawn	Bryce's Mackay-Peyne
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Screenplay	Joy Cecil	Gay	John Gendish
Editor	Max Lowman	Mary	Bonnie Brander
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Art director	Boyd Hagan	Kate	Debbie Turner
Costume designer	John Deveraux	Lou	Ivy Kline
Sound recorder	Karl Mattson	Ivy	David Campbell
		Rory	Karen White



Dawn (Bryce's Mackay-Peyne) and her sister (Ivy Kline) stroll through a park.



Bryce's Mackay-Peyne (Dawn) and John Deveraux (Harry) in a scene from the film.



Dawn (Bryce's Mackay-Peyne) and Kate (Debbie Turner) in a scene from the film.

French Cinema in Crisis

Continued from p. 263

Furthermore, linked for distribution purposes with Paramount, controls a smaller, but still significant sector: about 50 titles, and 5 per cent of the market. In the case of Gaumont-Public (recently formed into a Groupement d'Intérêt Économique), with its 100 screens in 35 buildings and its control by distribution over the programming of 100 titles, this figure is nearer 36 per cent. The huge Gaumont empire, monopolized par excellence, covered by some said by others, is the only rich, successful and safe feature of the French cinema industry.

The situation on the other side of the fence is grave. Independent exhibitors, who still own more than 50 per cent of France's cinema, struggle to survive, their only salvation is in second releases, festivals and revivals of classic independent distributors, seldom able to obtain the financially successful film required by this "circus" for their own circuits, and rapidly disappearing. Nearly, the efforts are left elsewhere, particularly in the production side: where a film must now be made with the approval of a large company, or be condemned to come out only in a few independent cinemas and will never be viable.

Art-house are also suffering. While some, by virtue of their links with a powerful distributor, are guaranteed the best films, those that remain independent fall victim to a vicious circle. First time they show an experimental or difficult film — and their access to films is generally limited to these considered financially risky — they lose money and the confidence of their distributors.

If, however, their program has many commercial films, their professional status and tax status are withdrawn — between 50 and 80 per cent as supervised years. It is unlikely that the ideal situation, with all films being freely available to all distributors and exhibitors, will ever prevail in France.

In conclusion, remarks are warranted about two other recent phenomena. Firstly, the philosophy of exhibitors was changed, at least in the cities, by the matronizing of large cinema-complexes, technological marvels with automatic control and synchronization technology.

In November 1977, Paris had 89 such complexes, many of which were able to run from four to seven simultaneous screenings. However, research during 1978 showed a considerable swing back to the concept of one large hall.

For various reasons — ranging from difficulty of turning an old building designed for one screening size into a comfortable one with good vision and acoustics, from the underestimation felt by the role operator in charge of four or five different cinemas when an emergency arises to the depletion of an already depleted patrimony and the consequent inability to persuade people straggling on the spot to buy a ticket to another film — complexes have proven an unsuccessful and uneconomic attempt to correct the uneven look to the cinema. Even though they may have allowed provincial filmgoers access to many more films.

Secondly, several problems have been caused by the annual release of new, in different cinemas, of films with a dubious economic future. As well as making it impossible to judge the success at box office of such films, the disposal of winter time is driven the three important points.

Claude Zidi's *L'amant* is an outstanding



Clément, Dauphine, Bello, Cécile Lenoir and Pierre Desrues in Claude Zidi's *L'amant* (see opposite)

example of such confusion, for it could have been considered a brilliant success: look no further: a record audience of 23,000 at the opening night (October 1977), ticket sales of 196,000 in the first week and a run of six weeks in the "Top Ten". However, these figures were only obtained by opening the film simultaneously in 27 Paris cinemas and another 100 in the provinces.

Very quickly the film lost its appeal, its financial success was extremely short-lived, and it suffered the most uncomfortable fall-off ever recorded: 120,000 in the second week, then 77,000, 56,000 and only 35,000 in the fifth week, by which time its momentum had become well and truly established and it was obvious that the film would never be able to recoup its budget of FF 28 million (\$5.75 million), which included FF 2 million (\$435,000) for publicity. More seriously, however, what would happen to the first 300,000 disappointed filmgoers? When would they not be seen again outside a French film?

With such a set-up, the industry is obviously incapable of absorbing the rural impenetrable crisis of the 1970-8 period, in which the professionals continue to blame the public for not filling the halls, not supporting French films and preferring to sit at home watching films on television. The public, meanwhile, gripped at high prices and shoddy poor, complicated films for its preference for a comfortable attachment and the small screen.

No doubt this is a prelude to the troubles that have plagued the cinema over the last decade. But at least they were partially blunted by the phenomenal success of pornography, which first hit the scene about 1973. *Audiences* fed back by sex education, sales abroad were greatly boosted and it seemed, for a while, that the ramp of L'Écranmédic had persuaded the public to go to the cinema more often.

When, however, the Government decided to enforce severe economic constraints on pornography⁴, all the malaise surfaced again.

4. During government legislation, sanctions and controls aimed at economically depriving pornography (films and books) in 1976, the percentage of R-rated films had contributed to net losses: 33 per cent in 1976 in 45 per cent in 1977. Compared to a normal film budget of about FF 1 million (\$250,000) or to a porno cost of only half that (in US terms) of \$125,000, FF 375,000 (\$93,750) pornography films made in 45 minutes with only half "no interest" or average "no interest" (100,000) — a year's income — then FF 200,000 (\$50,000) and are thus financially viable with a marketing of 100,000. Since the implementation of "specialized" sales has increased to about 5.5 per cent of the total cinema screenings, and since they "specialized" clientele brings in about 5.5 per cent of the total revenue, considerable profits remain in the field of pornography.

The public is in general seeking a separate world dealing with the moral and economic disadvantages, and economic advantages to some of rules for the support fund of the recent boom in pornography.

So much so that, in December 1976, the Secretary of State for Culture, attacked and blamed on all sides, carried out a program of research and interviews with cinema professionals in an attempt to diagnose the illness and suggest a cure. After four weeks of feverish activity only one doctor was named — the French Government. It was up to the Government to rescue its cinema.

To judge whether such a demand was reasonable, while the state like obvious incapacity in terms of distress could play the role of saviour, let us look at its present organization in cinema.

GOVERNMENT

In addition to commissions working on purely scientific and technical levels — and it should be noted that France's reputation as a leader in this field is well deserved — the Government has now produced economic, administrative and legislative support to the industry on a scale never before experienced. Two departments in particular, both within the Ministry of Culture, assume these functions.

Firstly the Centre National de Cinématographie (CNC), created by an Act of Parliament in 1946, gives initial approval for the making of films, co-ordinates the different branches of the industry, controls the documentary and non-commercial sector, is responsible for film preservation and the film archives, releases important statistics and attendance figures, provides details of production activity, contracts and transactions, verifies gross revenue as declared by exhibitors and then supervises the distribution of the money among the various beneficiaries on the set percentage basis.

Through its semi-political wing, association, Cinéma Film, the CNC promotes and publicizes French cinema abroad, negotiates with organizers of national international festivals and generally acts as an information agency. It is also in charge of censorship, through its "Commission de censure" — a very busy group of people who, in 1976 alone, viewed 742 films and had to spend an 8-month (normally 6) or extended to 124 of them.

By far the most important body of the CNC, however, is the allocation of the *fin de siècle* (support fund). Although the Government provides the largest part of this financial aid — the fund being a special account of the State Treasury — monies are also forthcoming from other sources. These are professional subscriptions, television rights (now about FF 10 million (\$4.35 million)), local sales and special loans on foreign films (up to FF 300,000 (\$62,500)), "film approval" (those made without state approval) and X-rated films (the "repressed cinema", taxed to the hilt, paid about FF 35 million (\$5.5 million) in 1977), and taxes on companies that produce and distribute these three types of films.

The final cut on the fund is naturally for the wages and overheads expenditure incurred by all government departments dealing with cinema. It is then up to the Minister for Culture to decide who gets what. In 1976, FF 223 million (\$44.5 million) was disbursed from the fund, FF 29 million (\$6 million) in the form of various subsidies and grants. These went to producers of short film, IDHIC (the official State film school), technical firms or cinematograph for research or improvement of equipment and processes, studios, laboratories, processing plants, and all security to banks willing to lend money to



Scene from Alain Resnais's *Melies*. During FF30 million (\$5 million), the film is one of the most expensive ever made in France.

producers and exhibitors

During 1977, substantial amounts were given to exhibitors for the modernization of projection equipment (particularly useful for the small operator), for the construction of automated cinema-complexes and, for the first time ever, to distributors who have previously been the poor relations. Another, a large percentage of the fund is allocated to develop new writers (advances against receipts), a lost system which is administered by the second of the government agencies, the Office de la Création Cinématographique (OCC).

The OCC was set up in 1975 to encourage original creation from a financial point of view. It consists of six departments, each with specific responsibilities.

(i) Short films. Over a target has been agreed, up to FF 60,000 (\$82,500) may be allocated. In 1976, FF 2 million (\$416,000) was spent on 42 original projects (documentary, fiction, cartoon and experimental) and FF 46,000 (\$59,500) on emerging films to 35 mm. Now that this has become a very important area, the department may soon have to change to accommodate the growing demands.

(ii) Distribution. As assistance for films considered "difficult" (French or foreign) and liable to encounter special problems in France and abroad, a sum of up to FF 100,000 (\$128,750) — but never more than 50 per cent of the total cost involved — may be given to help finance publicity and the making of copies. In 1976, FF 35 million (\$79,300) was allocated.

(iii) Research. A maximum of FF 15,000 (\$31,251) may be lent to an author/writer to facilitate the composition, completion or reworking of a full-length scenario. The money is repayable on a percentage basis.

(iv) Tests. This one-man department has, as its brief, the finding of new talent. Each year, it helps 6-10 beginners make part of a film. It can easily run down ability. If they are successful, the newcomers can later seek help to make a full-length film.

(v) Research. This department is primarily involved in socio-economic research on images and new techniques.

(vi) Advances against receipts. The most vital work of the OCC is the allocation of funds received from the CNC for assistance in the production of feature films. Every two years a commission of 14 is appointed, among whom there must be at least one producer, director, scriptwriter, actor and critic. From the 430-odd scenarios and projects presented, it is usually lauding those which it immediately rejects and which thereby become ineligible. It chooses those films of "quality" considered most worthwhile. It then recommends to the Minister for Culture that a loan be granted.

Theoretically, priority is given to the most ambitious and more complex works — the ones that would have greatest difficulty in raising finance privately. The average loan is about FF 700,000 (\$845,750) and is valid for one year, with a possible extension of six months. If the producer has not found finance by that time he loses the loan.

Since the "advances against receipts" system is meant to be self-financing, all loans advanced to films eventually completed are repayable, the first 13 per cent of gross receipts, being retained to the fund until the debt has been paid off. The budget for 1978 was approximately FF 25 million (\$525 million), allowing the financing of at least 25 projects.

Obviously, the various forms of assistance provided by these two bodies are ample proof that the Government is making a substantial contribution to French cinema. But many complaints have recently been voiced within the ranks of professionals, critics and the public.

Many claim that there have been incorrect channelling and inequitable distribution of funds, enabling and inequitable loans, biased selection of films granted financial aid and other political prejudices. Such grievances need to be seriously examined before one can state with any confidence that the Government is in fact doing all it can to pull the ailing industry out of the doldrums.

There is little doubt that the support fund, though still serving a very useful purpose, needs a drastic overhaul, at least insofar as its

apportionment of monies is concerned. The exhibitors have for too long been favored recipients, it is not unusual for them to receive 70-80 per cent of their outlay on modernization or restoration.

The OCC department, which is responsible for distribution, has been accused of inaccurate assessments; among the films refused financial aid was Alain Kurosawa's *Derrière Océan*, a film whose success proved, if such proof was needed, that aesthetic qualities do not necessarily run counter to the dictates of commercial viability, a matter which all sectors of the French cinema might well ponder.

Taxation has long been a bone of contention. Initially, complaints were expressed about abuse of the 20 per cent tax relief afforded to art-films, and against those which were not promoting or screening the required number of quality films, as we have seen earlier, the Government was quick to withdraw its those concessions when Maurice P. Sarrat (1970), however, a new argument has been raised on the 17.5 per cent V.A.T. levied on entry-tickets. The industry, contending that the Government is making an excessive profit from cinema — FF 1360 million (\$325 million) in 1976 — and that all goods and equipment are being taxed at the luxury rate (15 per cent), wants the V.A.T. lowered to 7 per cent to bring it into line with books, and theatre and concert tickets.

The main butt of the attacks, however, is the "advances against receipts" commission, which has recently fallen from the high standards set by its predecessors. Some of its judgments have been, at best, unusual and debatable; at worst, unfair and ill-aimed to have been used to serve political and private ends, outside the realm of aesthetics. At this commission plays such a vital role, one should look in some detail at its findings.

In relation to the film granted a loan, the commission has clearly revealed not only a certain shorts for the economic situation of the country's cinema, but also an ideological orientation which separates it from the tastes of the French (Algerians — even the most enlightened. If the applicant is an Algerian Jew, or known in this political circle, he has a distinct advantage; indeed, it is almost a necessity for him to take a political stance in his film. As the RPR deputy, Robert-André Vivien, put it when addressing the National Assembly:

"The commission is the result of desirability, with an ideological bias, for political ends. It recommends a film on the grounds contained by the power-that-be in Algeria, on the fortunes in Indochina, an anti-American film, a film against the rapacity, just to give thirty acts in advance."

Vivien found that, following these guidelines, advances had been made to quite a number of extreme leftist films, although they were sometimes made. Some of them were later incapable of finding a producer or distributor, because their mediocre quality was impossible to camouflage; others — *La henné du point de vue*, Alain Deva, *La commune de Palaiseau*. La question légitime les few supporters it found at the San Sebastián, Los Angeles and Montreal festivals — played to audiences so small that only a small part of the loan could ever be repaid.

3 The latest developments will be outlined in Part 2 of this article, to be published in time 2.

4 See his book *Le cinéma en France*, Paris, 1976, November 23, 1977, p. 142 (author's collection).



Mary Warren (Faye Dunaway) is increasingly drawn towards Tim (Tim Allen), who is characteristically handicapped.

TIM

"A love story of an older woman and a younger, intellectually-handicapped man."

Director
Producers
Screenplay
Editor
Production
Art Director
Casting
Sound

Michael Fine
Michael Fine
Michael Fine
David Stevens
Paul Dugan
John Curran
Elio Joff
Les McKinnon

Mary Warren
Tim Allen
Ron Silver
Emily White
Tom Arnold
David Mervin
Nick Harrison
Miss Harrison
Carly Campbell

Peter Larkin
Mel Gibson
Alison Kurtz
Pat Evans
Peter Onorati
Deborah Ransome
David Power
Margo Lee
Kevin Latta



The Matchless (Mary Warren and Tim Allen) at their wedding.



A friendship begins. Tim and Mary.



Carly Campbell (Kevin Latta) insists Tim is kind of his. She's about Mary's feelings for him.

Jim Sharmen

Continued from P. 271

We didn't rehearse in the way you do in the theatre. In theatre you rehearse people so that they can produce, each night, certain emotions, feelings and ideas. In film, however, you only want them to achieve those emotions, ideas and feelings for the single moment when the camera is turning.

Consequently, I didn't try to find those moments during rehearsals. We merely rapped out a general background which gave everyone some idea of the shape of the film.

I think it is important that each person has in his or her mind an emotional grasp of the character. That way they don't find themselves emotionally over-playing or under-playing a scene. There is usually only one climax for a character, and each person should know where that point is, and control their performance to suit.

Do you have any particular theories as to the use of the camera?

Summer of Secrets was shot in very long takes and only on a 20mm lens, that was a great technical discipline. The Night The Prowler was shot on conventional high-speed lenses, and with a highly mobile camera. I was striving for a visual style, whereby the camera movement would combine with the characters to advance the narrative.

Did you find it very difficult to raise the finance?

Quite difficult, even though it was a comparatively low budget film (\$410,000). It was due mostly to the uncertainty of the New South Wales Film Corporation. But Tony Buckley (the producer) managed to get the film made.

The film was shot in 16mm, which is unusual for a film of that budget. What were the advantages of using this?

There are two advantages, and the first was budgetary. Obviously 16mm stock is less expensive than 35mm, even though that's not the major saving, which is time and mobility. On 16mm you work with much lighter equipment, and you can work faster, especially on location. On a one-week shoot, this gives you far more important concerns, like what the film is about.

The other advantage was the look of the film. I had long talks with David Sanderson (director of photography) and we decided to go for a very harsh lighting style.



Beth Crookall as Dora Summer in Jim Sharmen's *The Night The Prowler*, from a screenplay by Patrick White

In many ways this was a reaction to many Australian films which have tried in their own technical excellence.

Many Australian films are concerned with form over content, and I felt that was the case with *Summer of Secrets*. I was very happy with it technically, but during the filming my concerns were with clarity, composition, lighting and camera movement, and I didn't have the time to spend on the vital areas of script and performance.

By the time I came to *The Night The Prowler* I was not concerned with technique. I felt sufficiently confident to pay less attention to it and could concentrate on the relationship between actor and camera - how I would tell the story and how I could achieve the performance level it required.

Somebody once said that we used to make films about people and now we make them about real crime. I would like to think that the major landscape in *The Night The Prowler* is the faces of the three central characters.

The film recently achieved some success at the Toronto Film Festival. Does this mean there is likely to be an interested overseas distributor?

Stuart Shapiro has bought the film for the US and will open in New York early in 1979. I believe it has also been sold to France, though an opening date has not been set. Certainly there was more interest in the film in New York, particularly from the Village Voice and Soho cinema. There was a Chabrol film, *Violette*, with a similar theme, and this gave them some point of comparison, which helps as it is a difficult film to describe, it does not fit into any category.

In this respect opacity is not always an advantage in the market.

place. Chabrol, I gather, has seen the film and is quite a fan, as was Lindsay Anderson, who saw it when he was recently in Sydney.

However, and now, which I think was in *The Hollywood Reporter*, did point to the film being about Polanski's discovery of compassion. I thought that was a perceptive observation, particularly as it was one of the things people who didn't enjoy the film felt was lacking. But I think compassion is something people not confused with such things as love and sentimentality.

You said the film was about compassion and that some critics have claimed you didn't treat the characters compassionately. The two, however, are not mutually exclusive....

Sure. To have felt something so strongly and painfully that one's response is to view it in a detached way, inevitably implies compassion.

One person said he was stirred by the truth and precision of the picture. At the same time he felt deeply for them, because, given their environment and circumstances, they could only act as they did, which is with a certain blindness. This led him to think about his parents and their situation.

When a film can produce such a response, I find it rewarding.

What is it like being a director with international experience working in Australia?

There are differences. In Britain, there is a great deal of expertise and an established industry. The Australian film industry, however, is somewhat of an enthusiasm, and obviously expertise will grow with the industry.

It is important not to over-ride the industry at an early stage. One

shouldn't pull a child an adult, and demand of him what you would of an adult. The important thing is to continue growing, and that can be in two ways.

Obviously film that will be commercially successful must be produced. But if we are to take ourselves seriously, we must also produce works that, while not actually quite as appealing to an audience, are prepared to view society in a critical light.

So much of Australian art has been of the charm school type. That was one of the barriers Patrick fought as a writer when his writings were attacked as pretentious verbal slugs at the beginning of his career. He had the same problem when his plays were initially produced.

FUTURE PLANS

What are your future plans?

I hope to continue my association with Patrick White and do another film. It will be a sophisticated comedy, the subject is film, and it will be his first original screenplay. It is based on a remarkable and witty idea, and should make a refreshing and different film.

Have there been any major influences that have shaped your work?

I have been influenced in my film and stage work by experimentation, particularly German Expressionism, and the films by F.W. Murnau, Fritz Lang and so on. I am very interested in the resurgence of the German cinema and the way in which it has been encouraged to view its own society without illusions.

In Australia, we have been encouraged to view our society communally, nostalgically and sentimentally, and that's unfortunate. As far as other influences go, directors such as Luis Bunuel, Luchino Visconti, and Georges Franju have impressed me.

These directors are known for making films that deal with the unusual....

They are films that have a certain poetic strength, not those that depend on documentary outrage.

When films were born, two schools developed: impressionism and expressionism. Impressionism tries to record what was happening, and expressionism tries to interpret. Nothing much seems to have changed since Melius and Luriers, and film still falls into two categories.

Certainly it's the poetic and expressionist school I find most interesting. *

Margaret Fink

Continued from P. 290

I think you should plan the promotional campaign like a war, and David and Kevin are doing that. Each film needs to be treated in its own special way. We thought and got a fair amount of publicity during production to create an initial awareness of the film. But we have also devoted a lot of effort to later magazine coverage. *The Women's Weekly*, for example, has decided to serialize large extracts from the novel, and *Angus and Robertson* are reprinting the book with the film's logo on the cover.

We believe that Judy Davis and Sam Neill will be major promotional assets, despite the fact that they were unknowns at the start of filming. Both gave excellent performances. Sam has also been snapped up by other producers since he worked with us, and by next year is going to be generating a glowing streamlet of interest.

I am also going to make Gil do a lot of this one because she is good material — she looks young and is a good sort.

Kevin and David have also begun talking about release publicity with GILG and there are a number of ideas being developed.

Are you planning to employ an overseas publicist?

Yes, we are talking to the NSWFC about this at the moment.

What is the plan for Cannes?

On New Year's day I stopped drinking, and I won't be having another drink until Easter. That way I can devote the next three months to really hard work. I am very serious about making this film a success overseas.

Do you see the Cannes Film Festival as the way to the American distributors?

Cannes is one way, but not necessarily the way.

Do you intend spending much on promotion at Cannes?

I don't know. I will have to discuss that with the NSWFC.

Are you planning to use the Australian Films office in Los Angeles?

Absolutely irrespective of whether Sam Griffiths is the right man for the job, his appointment is a very sensible one. It is so easy to spend \$77,000 on script development and achieve nothing, that you might as well spend it on an office in the U.S. After all, no independent



Sylvia Kelly working on her costume. From the Hip is Pattern Only.

producer in Australia could afford it.

Will the NSWFC play a major role in selling the film overseas?

I expect so. But the selling will also need my energies and personality, far what they are worth.

Have you thought about Filmmakers, or is that too soon?

I really don't know. I am looking a lot of these decades to Mike Thornhill and the NSWFC — they have so much more experience than I.

Who controls the final cut?

I do, but the most thrilling thing about the project has been the harmonious way Gil and I have worked together. I can trust her and, after all, isn't that what it is all about?

So far I have not been worried about this being a good film. But, as we all know, that doesn't mean it is going to be successful at the box office.

Do you have any future projects you are working on?

Bill Hardy is writing a script for me at the moment, it is an urban comedy about slightly neurotically so it will look contemporary when released. I want Robert Grubb and Germaine Greer to be in it. *

Gillian Armstrong

Continued from P. 292

It is disturbing in that the girl walks out the door at the end, only to go inside again. . .

Yes, and obviously I did that on purpose — I wanted to disturb people.

However, you did debate the ending for a long time. . .

Yes. Originally she kept walking, but I thought that was too easy. I think the new ending is truer.

Was it shown with "The Whore" in Melbourne?

Yes, and a lot of people didn't want to see *The Hurling* again. It had a two-week run before they took it off.

Because of Melbourne, Columbia didn't want to release it in Sydney in case they lost more money.

The film was also theatrically released in Sydney at the Union Cinema. . .

Yes. With the help of the AFC, I put it on a double bill with *Love Letters From Terahs Road*. I was nervous and it opened the

night I left. We did sneak business, with queues down the road. It was a really good double and people felt they had their money's worth.

The Weekly then took it up as a double bill for the Dandy Crown Nest.

It has been alleged that although the program took a lot of money at the Union, the return to the filmmakers was almost nil. . .

Yes. We stupidly didn't read our contracts and were both ripped off. We followed the pattern of the other double bill programs and didn't check the fine print.

I can't remember how much it made, but the deal we were offered with the Union was either \$800 for the theatre for the week, or 40 per cent of the gross. That would have meant paying a couple of thousand in theatre hire.

Did the advertising costs come out of that?

Yes, and \$3000 on publicity. The AFC got most money back and the Union made huge profits, but we made nothing. It was tragic. *

Full cast and crew details are printed on p. 293 in the Production Survey.

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Claude Lelouch

Continued from P. 263

But, just as everything is wearing out, one of the two renews himself or herself a little faster than the other. There is always one person in a couple who is a better fighter than the other, and can go out sooner to find new ideas. So the one who develops the most moves away from the other. It is a terrible rule.

What is wonderful is when two people enrich each other continuously and do not reject themselves. For example, he comes back home every day to a wife who tells him new things — or vice-versa for her.

When looking at most couples in that, as one lives with another person, one loses one's mystery. Little difficulties begin to occur. Perhaps if one had the courage never to do certain things in front of the other person, private or personal things like brushing one's teeth or washing around asked in the apartment, this would not happen.

A woman showing or plucking her eyebrows in front of a guy has no idea of the harm she is doing herself if she would only think to close the door, she would increase her mystery all the more.

In a couple, the thing that is mostly lacking is imagination. It is like putting flowers in an apartment — this does not serve any purpose, but it triggers the imagination, it is pretty. One must know to do things that are only pretty.

Does living together necessarily prevent two people from growing as individuals?

Not at all, but it depends on particular couples. If one of the two individuals is deeply jealous, he can ruin the other person's life. Jealousy is a very strange thing, when someone tells me he is not jealous, I just laugh. The trick is not to show one's jealousy. It is far harder to keep as a personal punishment. All we have this punishment to varying degrees, we should not better others with it.

The greatest problem couples face is an inability of each partner to understand that someone else could please the other. A man and a woman living together both believe they have a monopoly on the other's happiness. All too often a woman begins to sit jealously as soon as her man shows affection to his mother, sister, or woman friend. Whereas, in fact, deep love is to want the other to be happy, by whatever means. We have not succeeded in that yet. One needs a generous soul for that, and I personally have not met a woman with such a soul.

What ensures me in when I



Claude Lelouch, with actresses Angie Armer and Catherine Deneuve, on location for *It's a Wonderful Life*.

meet a couple that is healthy, and has been together a long time. I sense that these couples tend to go in the direction I have been pointing to, with deep love for the couple for the couple, each person needs to understand the other, and the reasons why the other says whatever he or she does. Above all, they sit personally toward each other.

In "Happy New Year" you say marriage is a contract for people who are afraid of loneliness and freedom. Do you still hold to that?

I am like all authors, in that I occasionally betray myself for the sake of a good line. But that line is still more or less true.

I think of a rather humiliating he forced to go through a marriage contract with the attitude, "Well, at least I am protected in that way." How can one think of protection when there is the word "love"? A person is protected only if love really exists.

You also say that a man is someone who goes all the way to the end of things. Is a woman someone who doesn't go to the end?

It is just that a woman is more subject to influences than a man. She changes direction more easily. But the ability to change one's mind faster is a form of intelligence as a woman has an argument of ideas which sounds better, she is accepted and accepted, whereas men are more stubborn and can go farther. There is what I meant. In fact, it is a tribute I make to women. I think women are more flexible, more sensitive and perhaps more intelligent than men.

But women do not have the same means to bring about their dreams. They lack physical

means, they lack strength. They are weaker than us physically.

On the level of reflection or thought, women have been somewhat held back. That is why there have been more men than women writers, and more male than female filmmakers. Until now, men have managed to protect this advantage by forbidding a certain number of things to women. The proof is that as women are being liberated, they are showing themselves to be intellectually our equals, and sometimes our superiors.

Do you think people in France approach love experiences differently than people in the U.S.?

It is hard to say. The Frenchman has been told so often that he makes love well that he has ended up believing it, in any case, he is living on that supposition. The American, however, has heard so often that he makes love badly that he has started believing it.

But, overlooking to purely a matter of individual cases, and it is possible to be very good with one person and very bad with another. None of us is constantly a great lover. So I think it is just French and American public relations that have set up that difference.

Is there anything particularly French about romance?

Well yes! We have behind us centuries and centuries of literature written by people who have told us in detail what we should do to seduce a woman. Our romantic library is more complete than the American, for example.

A Man and a Woman, for example, did better in the U.S. than it did in France. It is a romantic film, and yet it missed a supposedly less romantic people more than it moved the French.

Love Story was also more successful here. I could give you plenty of examples.

I think the dose of romance and violence in the U.S. is stronger than in France. There are more romantic here, and there are more violent people. You are the country of extremes. When I am here, I have the feeling I am meeting people who are fanatically good or who are really pretty bad. In my native country, mediocrity is more the rule. Americans regard me as a little of the Jewish people, where you are the best and the worst side by side.

What do you think of fairy tales?

Fairy tales are bad for little girls. As little girls grow up, they risk running face one disillusionment to the next, never finding the Prince Charming they heard so much about during their childhood. They let life go by every time they reject someone who does not correspond to their image of a perfect lover. They are consequently disappointed, that is why I am against fairy tales based on sexuality.

However, I am all for fairy tales that make us believe that little rabbits can talk, that blackbirds can sing, that fish are terribly funny when they tell a story about a girlfish. But I think I will avoid taking my daughter fairy tales about Cinderella or Prince Charming, so that all the stars eventually meet will have a bit of a chance. *

FILMOGRAPHY

- 1960 *Le temps de l'homme*
- 1961 *In the face of chance* (Filming was stopped after one week. Lelouch was later replaced by Jean-Paul Rappeneau)
- 1962 *Un homme qui se dresse*
- 1963 *La femme spectacle* (Screen Play) First was stopped by censor
- 1964 *Une fille et des fleurs*
- 1965 *Les grands maîtres* (Film was very difficult)
- 1966 *Un homme et une femme* (A Man and a Woman)
- 1967 *Votre ami l'homme* (For Your Love)
- 1968 *Un homme et une femme 2: Deux ans de France* (Continuation of the *Un homme et une femme*)
- 1969 *In the U.S. It Made Love* (Love, French)
- 1969 *Un homme et une femme*
- 1970 *Le temps (The Clock)*
- 1971 *Un homme et une femme*
- 1972 *Un homme et une femme* (Adventure in Adventure)
- 1973 *Le secret d'un homme* (Happy Accident)
- 1974 *Un homme et une femme* (My Love)
- 1975 *Un homme et une femme* (The End and the Beginning)
- 1976 *Un homme et une femme* (The Good and the Bad)
- 1977 *Un homme et une femme* (The Good and the Bad)
- 1978 *Un homme et une femme* (The Good and the Bad)
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- 2023 *Un homme et une femme* (The Good and the Bad)
- 2024 *Un homme et une femme* (The Good and the Bad)
- 2025 *Un homme et une femme* (The Good and the Bad)

Film Festival in New York
(Continued from p. 26)

"Harris' film, set in 1977, shows life at the more traditional fish, snapper and sardine stocks of Australia's coast, where pelicans abound, people are scarce, and the weather is temperamental. The plot is told through shots of beach and sea, meaningful glances, and in words only when absolutely necessary. The music is quiet, and very slowly and sensuously the film begins to unfold. Unfamiliar, it is not at all alienating, compelled to insouciant melodramatic suggestions that break the quiet spell. And while an only visual description of the boy losing the pelican starts seem mentally, a final shot — where the aboriginal informs Storm: 'You had a new pelican. It has been born to replace the old one.' (friend) — is such a simple and touching statement that it is hard to believe it is not a very cleverly chosen metaphor. Australia's

History: Fred Schepets's *The Devil's Playground*, a spooky if far from original story of a young seminary boy coming to terms with his spiritual and sexual needs, and Urban Storm's *In Search of Anne*.

Rex Reed, *Daily News*, November 29, 1978.

"When people used to think of Australia, they thought of kangaroos. Now, when people think of Australia, they think of The Three Bells. Neither stops, it turns out, is comprehensive: Australia is so vast and divergent a landscape as any continent on the industrial, social and economic map, and we're just now finding out how progressive that country really is through its growing film industry."

sent over by the Australian Film Commission, reminds me it is time to mention the Australian Film Festival.

Oddly, the two most acclaimed Australian films, *Wake in Fawn* (directed by Rock and the Last Wave, both by Peter Weir — we're not included in the event. Unhappily, they will open soon in commercial cinemas in the New York market). Nor is *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, this year's official Australian entry in the main competition at Cannes, and one of the films I would have thought most representative of the country's national platform, dealing as it does with a disturbing page from history about a decent, hard-working aborigine raised by missionaries who tries in vain to negotiate into white society according to the terms of the century. Maybe the Aussies are taking a little shock to bring us New York audiences.

"What we get instead are some of Australia's weaker efforts. I haven't seen all of the films on the week's schedule, but from what I have seen, I'd say none of these films have any chance at popular success outside the confines of downtown Melbourne. The opener was *Sunday Too Far Away*, a 1974 feature about sheep shearer that attempts to show Australian ranches as rugged as the terrain they inhabit."

“The Devil’s Playground was better made by one of Australia’s most gifted young directors, Fred Schepisi, but as there — religious obsession distorting the lives of young men in a mid-Catholic seminary — was characteristic and sensitive

"In Search of Azusa is one of the most boring and aridly pretentious films ever turned out by any country, proving there are cinematic frauds wasting money everywhere."

"The Night The Premier is as bewildering as its title. A series of consciousness-style wracks the story of a rape victim's social progress, but I suppose we should keep in mind the fact that these are works from a country and decade as war as the mass world."

"Some strengths do emerge in *The Getting of Wisdom*, the temptingly photographic but ultimately tedious study of a sensitive girl from a poor background struggling through the social rejection of an exclusive finishing school in 1910. Based on a popular novel in Australia, this pulp-paperback kind of minor fiction has more impact at home than it has in the U.S., where we've seen these 'how tough it is to grow up' movies time and again."

Thelma Houston's *Cadillac* is a beautifully mediated and often stirring biographical song about a wealthy young wife who loses her husband at the height of the Depression, sets out to make a new life for her two children, and ends up working as a barmaid in a male-dominated saloon society. A sentiment in *Analystia*, this *Women's Lib* concerto will strike chords in the hearts of people everywhere, for its sweetness, honesty and illumination of the human heart is universal. Few films anywhere have so accurately reflected the lives of women as *Analystia*. Helmi Moring, *Analystia* has produced a richness of music ability.

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